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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

STEREOTYPES OF SEX-DIFFERENTIATION IN ENGLISH USAGE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

BY

© RUTH A. DYCK

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN

PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled STEREOTYPES OF SEX-DIFFERENTIATION IN ENGLISH USAGE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY submitted by RUTH A. DYCK in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE in PSYCHOLINGUISTICS.

Dr. G.D. Prideaux, Supervisor

Dr. J.T. Hogan

Dr. L.M. Stanford

Dr. K.L. Stewart, External Examiner

August 6, 1993
(Date)

ABSTRACT

Do men and women use English differently? Yes, they do. This is the answer found in ancient folklore and in modern anecdotes and cartoons; it is the conclusion (based largely on introspection and conjecture, it is true) reached by noted linguists such as Jespersen (1922) and Lakoff (1975); and, perhaps most surprisingly, it is the consensus of native English speakers.

To test the hypothesis that the sex of the originator of discourse is not predictable when such prediction must depend solely on an orthographic representation of the language used in the discourse, ten male and ten female native English speakers were asked to judge the sex of the speaker or writer of 104 written passages, 96 of which represented the presence or absence of one of twelve variables stereotypically associated with one or the other sex.

The results show that, for a majority of the variables tested, subjects judged passages containing variables associated with female language use as more likely to have been spoken by a female, and variables associated with male language use as more likely to have been spoken by a male.

Even though empirical studies have failed to produce conclusive evidence that men and women use language differently, the perception that they do exists.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preliminaries

Women talk differently from men. One has only to open the pages of almost any magazine to come across a cartoon or anecdote whose main purpose, it would seem, is to remind the reader that women speak a language all their own: a language which is variously depicted as garbled, illogical, unassertive, and in a word, inferior to that of men. This type of anecdote or cartoon is not, as one might suppose, perpetuated exclusively by men or in magazines predominantly directed at the male population. On the contrary, it is not unusual for women to criticize and ridicule their own use of language,[1] and many women's magazines exhibit a certain penchant for self-deprecating speech-related humour. This is, perhaps, not really surprising, considering that, whatever the origin of the notion, the perception that women's language differs from that of men is hardly an anomaly of modern times: indications are found in the folklores and in the recorded chronicles of numerous cultures that suggest that the perception of women's language as different and inferior may have existed for some time.

In the present century, linguists such as Jespersen (1922) and Lakoff (1975) have undertaken to construct theories about sex-preferential differentiation in the use of language, theories which seem to be based substantially on anecdotal evidence and longstanding stereotypes about the way men and women use language differently. It is reputed, for example, that in English women are likely to speak more, and to do so less directly and using simpler language, than men; to ask more questions and to fail to complete utter-

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[1] Lakoff suggests, though, that jokes about women and women's use of language are typically invented by men, or, at the very least, it is men who "establish what constitutes acceptable topics for joking about" (Lakoff, 1975, p. 82).

ances and ideas; to use standard (prescriptive) forms of grammar and pronunciation, euphemistic expressions, tag questions, hedges, and the like; and that men are more likely than women to swear and to use slang expressions. Many of these commonly-accepted ideas about sex-based differences in language use have been subjected to empirical study in order to determine whether they reflect the way people really talk, with the result that we are no wiser than before: empirical tests have, with few exceptions,[2] failed to support convincingly the allegations of sex-differentiation in the use of English.

Yet, in spite of the dearth of hard evidence to support it, the perception of sex-differentiation in language use persists. Not only is this evident in modern anecdotes, cartoons, and stories, but perception studies have shown that subjects *act as if* the differences of stereotype actually exist: naive subjects regularly ascribe speech characteristics to one sex or the other on the basis of the language used. Spender (1980) and Cutler and Scott (1990), for example, have documented findings that women's contributions to conversations were consistently judged to be greater than men's even when, in the case of the former study, men actually spoke almost twice as often as women. Similarly, studies by a number of researchers (cf. Kramer, 1974; Edelsky, 1976; Siegler & Siegler, 1976) have demonstrated a marked tendency on the part of male and female children and adults

[2] One such exception is that of differences in the way men and women address other members of the same sex: men, for example, may address one another as *buddy* or *pal*, while women may use terms such as *love* and *dear* to address one another. One would hardly expect the former terms to be used by women addressing other women, or the latter by men addressing other men. These address forms also differ in that the latter, but not the former, type is often used in addressing members of the opposite sex. Another variable of language use which is thought to be sex-differentiated in use is that of conversational topic. A number of early observational studies (cf. Moore, 1922; Landis & Burtt, 1924) clearly showed that men and women differed with respect to the topics they discussed. More recent research has, however, failed to show consistent evidence of sex-differentiation in conversational topic, although the stereotype still exists.

to assign statements containing alleged features of women's language, such as tag questions, "empty" adjectives, and hedges, to female speakers and statements containing features of taboo and colloquial language to male speakers.

If, as a growing amount of evidence seems to indicate, ascertainable structural differences do not exist in the way men and women use English, why do people continue to give credence to the notion of sex-differentiation in its use? A number of possibilities exist which may account for this persistence, one being that, as the survival of humans (as for other species) depends on certain obvious physical differences between the sexes, people may (consciously or not) deem it in their best interest to enumerate and accentuate as many differences as possible. There is considerable evidence to suggest that human males and females are perceived as opposites, and that this view extends far beyond the existence of the indisputable physical differences in sexual paraphernalia and vocal fundamental frequencies to presumed differences in (innate) cerebral capabilities, personality traits, and behavioural predispositions. The extension of this paradigm, then, to differentiation in language use is not implausible. Such differences in turn become the stereotypes by which everything is then measured. According to Lakoff,

> stereotypes are not to be ignored: first, because for a stereotype to exist, it must be an exaggeration of something that is in fact in existence and able to be recognized; and second, because one measures oneself, for better or worse, according to how well or poorly one conforms to the stereotype one is supposed to conform to (1975, p. 73).

Another possible reason for the perseverance of stereotypic perceptions of sex-differentiation in language use is found in the self-perpetuating nature of stereotypy. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get rid of a stereotype about a particular segment of society once that stereotype

has been established; rather, stereotypes tend to become more firmly entrenched with the passing of time. Stereotypes about sex-differentiation in the use of language are no different. In the words of Kramer,

> the stereotypes of male and female speech play a large part in determining how the speech behaviour of women and men is represented in the mass media, and this representation in turn strengthens the pervasiveness and stability of the stereotypes (1977, p. 159).

A third explanation for the perception that men and women use language differently may reside in the methodologies typically employed in studies of perceived language use. Researchers have variously made use of tests and questionnaires which involve self-evaluation of speech behaviour and characteristics, evaluation of artificially produced statements containing certain variables of alleged sex-differentiation in language use, and evaluation of speech samples from sources, such as cartoons, which are intrinsically stereotypic.

The risks inherent in claiming results based on introspection and self-evaluation are well-documented. Not only is it difficult for people to evaluate their own characteristics and behaviours objectively, but it is impossible for the researcher to ascertain that the results obtained by such means are based on objective and accurate self-perception rather than on subjects' efforts to provide responses they perceive as normal or expected (not necessarily the same).

Similarly, it is difficult to obtain results that accurately reflect native speakers' judgements of the sex of the speaker of made-to-order utterances, which often seem unnatural and are usually presented without context.

Perception studies involving subjective judgements of speaker sex in captions taken from cartoons (cf. Kramer, 1974; Dyck, 1992) are suspect for a number of reasons. Car-

toons are a popular form of entertainment in our culture, appearing in virtually every newspaper and magazine published in our society. They are highly visible, compact, and pithy, and the likelihood that a subject will be familiar with a particular cartoon caption presented in the stimuli, and that this familiarity will bias that subject's judgement, is not negligible. Indeed, cartoons and anecdotes alike rely almost entirely on their ability to evoke people's knowledge of, and familiarity with, the archetypes and stereotypes that already exist in the popular culture. Witness to this is the observation that people to whom a certain culture is foreign often fail to see the humour in the stories of that culture. Thus, even if subjects have not seen a particular cartoon whose caption they are asked to judge in terms of speaker sex, they may well be aware of some aspect of the assumed shared knowledge without which the humour in the cartoon would be lost. Even if this is not the case, the subject still faces the problem of having to evaluate statements that may seem less than natural, and for which no context is provided, since it is the cartoon itself (i.e., the drawing) which provides the context.

In an endeavour to circumvent the problems inherent in techniques such as those outlined above, the present study examines native speakers' judgements of language samples taken from actual oral and written discourse other than cartoons, anecdotes, and context-free statements produced specifically for evaluative purposes. The hypothesis was formulated that the sex of the speaker or writer[3] of discourse is not predictable when such prediction must depend solely on an orthographic representation of the language used in the discourse. To test this hypothesis, samples of oral and written discourse were selected which contained one of twelve variables stereotypically identified as being as-

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[3] For the sake of simplicity, the word *speaker* will be used to mean *speaker and/or writer* for the balance of this thesis.

sociated with one or the other sex.[4] The twelve variables represented in the stimuli are as follows:

1. Use of simple coordination to link sentences and clauses
2. Use of incomplete sentences
3. Use of indirect request forms
4. Use of tag questions
5. Use of grammatically proper forms
6. Use of swearing
7. Use of hedges
8. Use of "empty" adjectives
9. Use of intensifiers
10. Use of hyperbole
11. Use of euphemism
12. Use of slang

As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, all but two of these variables are commonly associated with female speech; this is not by design, but is, rather, a result of the greater tendency for women's speech patterns or habits to be singled out as the *non-normal* case. The two exceptions are the use of swearing and the use of slang, which are typically viewed as part of male speech.

The twelve variables selected for testing lend themselves well to the task involved in this study (i.e., judgements of orthographically presented stimuli), as judgements of relative talkativeness, for example, do not. In addition, many of these variables have been assessed empirically, thus allowing a direct comparison of the results of this perception study with the results of tests of actual language usage.

1.2. Preview

Chapter 1 has served as a general introduction to the area of sex-differentiation in language use; in addition, the focus of the present study has been made known. Before going any further, however, it is necessary to provide more

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[4] The primary sources on which the selection of variables was based were Jespersen (1922) and Lakoff (1975).

of a foundation for the undertaking. Chapter 2 will endeavour to provide that foundation by outlining the major theoretical, observational, and empirical research on stereotypic use of language by the sexes, especially as it pertains to those variables under examination here. With the context for this study thus firmly established, Chapter 3 will comprise a detailed account of the methodology used in the experimentation on which this enterprise is based, while Chapter 4 will contain the results obtained in the experiment, as well as a preliminary discussion and interpretation of the data. In Chapter 5, these results will be discussed in detail, and the findings interpreted in terms of the stated hypothesis and in conjunction with the results of previous research in the area. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and implications suggested for future research.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1. The Variables

The previous chapter introduced the notion that women and men differ in their use of English. It was disclosed, moreover, that the purpose of this study was to test the ability of native English speakers to identify the sex of the speaker of actual speech samples with respect to a number of variables, which were also listed. The specific variables which will be used to test the hypothesis are based on claims of sex-differentiated use made by Jespersen (1922) and Lakoff (1975).

In this chapter, a review will be undertaken of the results of observational and empirical research into these claims. The variables under examination here are presented again, in table form, below:

Table 1
Variables Stereotypically Associated with a Particular Sex

Variable Number	Description of Variable	Sex with Which Associated
1	Use of simple coordination to link sentences and clauses	Female
2	Use of incomplete sentences	Female
3	Use of indirect request forms	Female
4	Use of tag questions	Female
5	Use of grammatically proper forms	Female
6	Use of swearing	Male
7	Use of hedges	Female
8	Use of empty adjectives	Female
9	Use of intensifiers	Female
10	Use of hyperbole	Female
11	Use of euphemism	Female
12	Use of slang	Male

The literature on each variable will be reviewed independently.

Before delving into such an item-by-item review, however, it will be useful to look at the variables in terms of certain overall divisions. In terms of grammatical categories, the variables of sex-based differences in the use of English which are to be examined here can be separated according to whether they constitute syntactic (items 1 through 5) or lexical (items 6 through 12) differences. As well, it should be noted that the presumed sex-differentiation in the use of the variables under examination is based on certain views of women's language as being simpler (items 1 and 2), more polite, indirect, and/or tentative (items 3, 4, 7, and 11), full of trite and trivial expressions (item 8) and gross exaggerations (items 9 and 10), prescriptively correct (items 5 and 12), and devoid of taboo and vernacular expressions (items 5, 6, 11, and 12).

With this in mind, we can now enter upon a systematic review of both theoretical claims and empirical research pertaining to the specific factors under investigation in the present study.

2.2. Empirical Evidence Related to the Variables

2.2.1. Use of Simple Coordination to Link Sentences and Clauses

Jespersen claims that men and women differ in the way they construct sentences, suggesting that, while men use complex sentence constructions, building sentences "like a set of Chinese boxes," with clauses nested one within another, women build sentences "like a string of pearls, joined together on a string of *ands* and similar words" (1922, p. 252). According to Jespersen, this differential use of clausal complexity in sentences demonstrates that women's command of the language is inferior to that of men.

One way to test variation in clausal complexity empirically is by comparing the number of subordinate clauses to the total number of clauses in speech produced by language users. This method has been employed by a number of re-

searchers to test whether men and women differ in their use of clausally complex sentences. In one such study, Ursel (1989) asked male and female university students to describe orally a scene from the movie *Adam's Rib*. Although no significant differences in clausal complexity were found due to the sex of the speaker, an addressee effect was found, with both sexes using more subordinate clauses when the person spoken to was female. Similar results were obtained by Dyck (1990), who examined the language contained in soap opera dyads.[5] In a third study, Prideaux, Hogan, and Stanford (1992) failed to find evidence of sex-differentiation in the use of clausally complex sentences in either oral or written descriptions of a movie scene (the same scene as that used by Ursel); nor did they find an effect due to the sex of the addressee, contrary to the results obtained by both Ursel and Dyck.

Based on the available evidence, there appears to be no factual basis for claims that men and women differ in the way they construct complex sentences. One has to wonder, then, what prompted such a claim. In his treatise on women's use of language, Jespersen, to a large extent, used examples from written works by men to support his claims that male use of language is superior to that of females. It is well documented that at the time of Jespersen's writing, men still greatly outnumbered women in attaining a high level of education. Due presumably in part to their lack of education as well as their inferior status in society (as persons in their own right who were able to vote, own property, and the like), there was a paucity of female authors for comparison. Consequently, Jespersen's claims may have resulted in part

[5] It is debatable whether soap operas can be considered a reliable source for studies investigating actual language use, since it could be argued that they are too much based on stereotypic use of language; however, since they are the products of writers in the language, they will for the present purposes be treated as reliable; this decision is further validated by the fact that the results of the particular study in question tended to conform with those of similar studies of actual (i.e., non-contrived) language use.

from the comparison of written samples of male language with oral samples of female language; certainly, some of Jespersen's examples of the language used by women are drawn from the way women are depicted as speaking in novels authored by men. If indeed Jespersen's comparison is based, even to a small extent, on a comparison of male written and female oral language, it is small wonder that women fared so poorly, given the well-documented differences between written/formal and oral/informal use of language. It might be reasonable to suppose, then, that both men and women would tend to make greater use of clausal complexity in written language than in oral speech.

2.2.2. Use of Incomplete Sentences

According to Jespersen, women have a tendency, when speaking, to jump from topic to topic and sentence to sentence without completing the previous ones. Although the perception of women's speech as being flighty and inconsequential is pervasive, there is very little evidence either that this perception is based in reality or that it is not, since few documented studies have addressed this issue. The empirical studies that exist, however, do not support the hypothesis that women and men differ in the number of incomplete ideas expressed.

In one such study, Brotherton and Penman (1977) analyzed the recorded responses of 15 male and 19 female Australian first year university students to three pictures presented as part of a Thematic Apperception Test and found no significant differences in the number of incomplete ideas expressed by men and by women.

In another study, Dyck (1990) examined the number of sentence fragments used by male and female members of soap opera dyads. For the purposes of this study, the arbitrary decision was made to count only those partial sentences which minimally contained a verb; in addition, incomplete sentences resulting from either overlaps or interruptions by

the other member of the dyad were discounted. Dyck found that, contrary to Jespersen's claim, more sentence fragments were found in the speech of male characters than in that of female characters, although this difference was not significant; furthermore, a greater number of the males than the females in the dyads left sentences unfinished. For speakers of both sexes, failure to complete sentences was more prevalent when the addressee was male (10%, vs. 2% when the addressee was female).

Although there is a scarcity of documented empirical work in this area, the available evidence does not substantiate Jespersen's claim that women's language is more likely to contain incomplete ideas and sentences. It seems intuitive, rather, (and is in fact, again, well documented) that, regardless of sex, formal written language is more fluent than oral language, which, as a result of being processed on-line, is fraught with hesitations, corrections, and redirections and subject to constant adjustment as a result of both linguistic and extralinguistic cues by the hearer.

Although the results of empirical studies do not link the use of incomplete sentences more to females than to males, the stereotype exists. There is considerable evidence to suggest that women are interrupted in conversation more often than men, and that men do most of the interrupting (cf. Zimmerman & West, 1975; Eakins & Eakins, 1976). It is possible, then, that women are perceived as failing to complete sentences more often than men because they are interrupted more often.

2.2.3. Use of Indirect Request Forms

Lakoff has suggested that men and women differ in the way they use directives, claiming that, while men are likely to ask for what they want by making use of direct commands or demands, women tend to use indirect forms of requests, often incorporating the use of modal auxiliaries such as

could and *may* to soften a request. The use of a particular kind of request form can be linked at least in part to the degree of politeness that a specific situation or context warrants. One is more likely to be polite to people in authority, and the degree of politeness a speaker uses may depend to some extent on the level of social equality that is perceived to exist between the participants in a conversation. Politeness is shown in requests by formulating the request in such a way that it is left up to the hearer whether he or she will cooperate; an indirect request is approximately the opposite of a direct command, although varying degrees of indirectness are possible. Lakoff argues that, since men hold the power in our society, women are more likely to use such expressions of powerlessness.[6]

Evidence that males and females differ in their use of directives is found in a number of studies which examined interactions between the sexes in both children and adults. In observations of the play of children of both sexes on a Philadelphia street, Goodwin (1980), for example, found that boys tended to use direct demands while girls were more likely to use less direct requests to suggest, rather than demand, action. Similar differences in the use of directives have been observed (by Engle, 1980) in the speech of mothers and fathers interacting with their children at play.

In another study, Crosby and Nyquist (1977) examined elements of "women's language" in the speech of people requesting information from male and female attendants at a booth at an urban municipal center. Points were assigned on the basis of a speaker's use of four reputed indicators of the female register, including hedges and indirect language; for example, a request containing several indicators of indirectness (*I wonder if you could tell me* ...) rated 3

---

[6] It would seem, though, that if women's use of certain speech forms is perceived to be a result of their relative powerlessness in society, the tendency to use such speech forms would more accurately be linked to societal status than to speaker sex.

points, while a direct demand (*Tell me where Room 202 is*) received no points. The researchers did not state individual results for the elements tested; the overall results, however, show an absence of any significant speaker or addressee effect, although the score was reportedly lowest for males speaking to male attendants.

Observational studies such as these suggest that, at least in interactions between male and female children and between parents and their children, there may be some truth to the claim that males and females differ in their use of direct or indirect request forms, although the existing evidence does not show that adult men and women would differ in this respect if they were speaking to an equal.

Whether it can be demonstrated conclusively that male and female speakers actually use different kinds of request forms, people appear to believe that such differences exist. In an analysis of responses to questionnaires in which 122 adults and 122 primary school (Grades 1, 3, and 6) children of both sexes judged the sex of the speaker of 24 statements containing 12 stereotypically sex-differentiated language variables, Edelsky (1976) found a tendency for statements containing indirect request forms (*Won't you please...*) to be ascribed to female speakers; this tendency was categorically linked[7] to females only by 6th graders.

While studies observing interactions between children in same-sex play groups and between young children and adults of both sexes suggest that females are more likely than males to use indirect forms of requests, observations of interactions in which only adults participated fail to show such differences. The results of perception studies, however, indicate that the stereotype exists.

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[7] A variable was determined by Edelsky to be linked categorically to a particular sex if 70% or more of respondents in any age group assigned it to that sex and if less than 15% assigned it to the opposite sex.

2.2.4. Use of Tag Questions

Lakoff has suggested that one of the ways in which women express tentativeness or uncertainty is by the frequent use of tag questions. This claim has failed to be substantiated reliably in the numerous studies in which it has been put to the test. In an early study, Dubois and Crouch (1975) recorded all tag questions used by participants at a small professional workshop. Rather than confirming Lakoff's claim, this study showed that all 33 tag questions used during the course of the conference were produced by male speakers. In another study, Crouch and Dubois (1977) examined tape-recorded samples of the speech of 50 male and 67 female graduate students participating in seminars and found, again, that males used more tag questions than females.

Other researchers, however, have found a greater number of tags in the speech of women than in that of men. In an examination of the occurrence of interrogative forms in more than twelve hours of taped conversations between three couples, Fishman (1980) found that women used three times as many tag and yes-no questions as men (87 vs. 29). Fishman does not, however, report on how many of the interrogative forms were tag questions; the results cannot, therefore, be taken as conclusive evidence that women use significantly more tag questions than men.

In a more recent study, Holmes (1984) found that women used slightly more tag questions than did men; of interest in this study was the finding that the tag questions produced by the sexes tended to be of different types (and used for different purposes), with men using modal tags to express uncertainty, and women using facilitative tags as a means of maintaining conversations.[8] According to this result, it is men, and not women, whose use of tag questions indicates tentativeness on the part of the speaker.

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[8] Note that Fishman (1980), too, had suggested that the use of yes-no and tag questions was a strategy for conversational maintenance.

In her study of dyadic language in soap operas, Dyck (1990) also found that female characters used slightly more tag questions overall, although this finding was not statistically significant. An examination of the types of tags employed showed that, regardless of speaker sex, all tags used were facilitative, and that women were more likely than men to use formal tags. Similarly, in an analysis of more than seven hours of taped adult speech, Baumann (1976) found no significant differences in the number of tag questions used by men and women.

Empirical evidence on sex-differentiated use of tag questions is clearly not conclusive since, in those cases where significant differences are found, some studies show that women make greater use of tags and others show that men use more. Nevertheless, the results of studies where subjects are asked to judge the sex of the speaker based on orthographically presented speech examples reveal that speakers of the language consistently *attribute* such constructions to women and not to men. Siegler and Siegler (1976), for example, report that both men and women (24 of each sex) judged statements containing tag questions to be significantly more female-like than statements identical except for the tag. Edelsky (1976) also found a tendency, though non-categorical,[9] for adults and older primary (Grade 6) children to attribute the use of tags to female speakers. Other research shows that nursery school children (Garcia-Zamor, 1973) and children in Grades 1 to 5 (Fillmer & Haswell, 1977) associated the use of tag questions most often with women. These studies show that, even though empirical evidence fails to provide conclusive results on which sex is more likely to use them, there is a strong perception that tag questions are a feature of women's speech and not that of men.

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[9] For an explanation of Edelsky's criteria for categorical linkage, see note 7.

2.2.5. Use of Grammatically Proper Forms

One of the ways in which a language is preserved in a particular desired state is by the adherence of its speakers to a prescriptive standard of usage. The perception of women as the conservators of language is longstanding; according to Jespersen,

> [women] do nothing more than keep to the traditional language which they have learnt from their parents and hand on to their children, while innovations are due to the initiative of men (1922, p. 242).

Both Jespersen and Lakoff espouse the notion that women are more likely than men to use grammatically proper forms of language.

The hypothesis that men and women differ in their use of standard forms of grammar has been tested by various researchers. Most of the documented studies in this area, however, have focussed on the phonological aspect of this question, that is, on differences in pronunciation. Trudgill (1972), for example, examined the use of *-ing* versus *-in* (in words such as *running*) among middle and working class women and men in Norwich and found that, regardless of style (*casual*, *formal*, *reading*, and *word list*), women tended to use more standard forms than men, especially in the more formal contexts; this was especially noticeable in the speech of middle class women, whose formal speech styles showed a marked shift upwards toward the speech norms of the next higher social class. Similar results for this and other phonological variables have been reported by a number of researchers (cf. Fischer, 1958; Labov, 1966; Shuy, Wolfram, & Riley, 1967).

Other studies (cf. Wolfram, 1969; Labov, 1972b; Milroy, 1980) have shown that the use of prestige standard forms of pronunciation varies not only with sex, but also with age, with younger women consistently using more prestige forms than older women.

Although considerable research has focussed on male and female use of standard forms versus the vernacular in phonology, there are fewer studies documenting the empirical examination of sex-differentiation in the use of *syntactically* proper forms (which is of primary interest here). Nevertheless, some work has been done in this area, notably by Cheshire (1978; 1982a; 1982b). In a series of studies which examined sex-differentiation in the use of standard and nonstandard morphological and syntactic features, Cheshire showed that adolescent males in Reading were more likely than their female counterparts to use nonstandard forms of verbs, tending to use 3rd person instead of 1st person singular and plural (*They calls me*; *You has to ...*; *You was ...*), present tense for past tense forms (*I come down here yesterday*), *ain't* for negative forms of the auxiliaries *have* and *be*, and negative concord (*You ain't no boss*). Cheshire showed, moreover, that, for each sex, there was variability within groups such that core members within each group (who adhered to the vernacular culture) were more likely to use nonstandard forms than those on the fringes of the groups (a similar finding to Labov's (1972a) study of adolescent black peer groups).

In other studies, Wolfram (1969) found a slightly greater tendency for males than females to reduce or delete final consonant clusters that served grammatical functions (e.g., using 1st instead of 3rd person singular in *she go ...*), while Shuy, Wolfram, and Riley (1967) report a finding that men used 30% more double negatives (e.g., *We don't have no time*) than women. As well, Shuy et al. found that males were more likely than females to use pronominal apposition (*My brother, he went to the park*).

Research such as that by Cheshire suggests that the use of standard versus vernacular forms of syntax is perhaps better linked to differences of socialization than sex. The occupational roles of men and women in our culture have traditionally been very different, with men usually going out

to work, and women staying at home. If women's speech is found to contain more standard forms than that of men, it may be due less to their gender than to the lack of opportunity to form the kinds of tightly structured networks formed by men in the workplace; because their traditional societal role has tended to isolate women to a greater extent than men, there has been less pressure on them to conform to the vernacular or to the norms of solidarity (cf. Flexner, 1960; Coates, 1986). Such a view appears to be supported in research carried out by Milroy (1980), who examined the use of standard and vernacular forms of grammar by women and men in three working class areas of Belfast. Milroy notes that, in areas where a high percentage of women were in the work force, women tended to use more nonstandard forms, even to a greater extent than men in the same age group in areas of high unemployment among males. This has led Milroy to observe that, given the normal social order where men are more likely to be employed outside the home, women tend to be more aware of social status than men; but when this order is reversed, and more women are forced to enter the work force, women's tendency to use standard forms of speech drops sharply and is replaced by a rise in the type of vernacular usage normally apparent in male groups. This evidence suggests that the use of grammatically proper forms would more aptly be attributed to social role than to sex.

Studies such as those cited above show a general tendency for women to use more standard forms than men, even though this tendency cannot clearly be attributed to sex alone. Another type of study has shown that women believe that they use even more standard forms than they actually use. Trudgill (1972), for example, demonstrated that, when asked to identify their own pronunciation of a list of words from a number of possibilities, there was a tendency for women to overestimate their use of prestige forms, while more men underestimated their use of such forms.

As well, the results of perception studies show that the use of standard forms is more likely to be attributed to female speakers than to male speakers. In a study in which 466 high school and university students were asked to rate 51 characteristics as typical of male or female speech, Kramer (1977) found that the characteristic of "good grammar" was attributed to female speakers significantly more often than to male speakers; moreover, the sexes differed in this attribution of good grammar to females in that male subjects (but not female subjects) significantly attributed this characteristic to female speakers. Noting that, overall, women perceived greater differences between the speech of the two sexes for four times as many of the speech characteristics as men, Kramer suggests that women are more sensitive to speech behaviour than men. According to Kramer,

> the control females are perceived to have is not over the speech situation but over the grammatical forms they use. The control males are perceived to have is not over such things as word choice or pronunciation, but over the speech situations (1977, p. 259).

According to the evidence, women both are attributed with using more proper grammatical forms than men and are shown to do so in actual language use, though the latter also appears to be influenced by factors of socialization.

2.2.6. Use of Swearing

Both Jespersen and Lakoff claim that men are more likely to use taboo language than are women. This tendency is attributed to women's seeming dislike of direct confrontation and coarse language.

The claim that men swear more than women has been tested in a number of studies. In an examination of 14 recorded conversations in 5 all-male, 5 all-female, and 4 mixed sex groups, for example, Gomm (1981) found that, while men showed a greater tendency overall to swear than women

(men swore almost three times more often than women), speakers of both sexes swore more often when in the company of other members of their own sex. Ursel (1989) found that swearing was used only by males in her study, but the incidence of swearing was too low to be conclusive; too, description tasks are likely not conducive to the production of expletives. Interestingly, the tendency of Ursel's subjects to use swear words was apparently not influenced by the sex of the addressee.

Another variable that may affect the use of expletives in speech is that of age. Oliver and Rubin (1975) used a questionnaire to examine self-declared use of swearing in women of different ages; the results showed that women over 40 were less likely than younger women to swear (or at least to admit doing so). Oliver and Rubin further report that single women between the ages of 40 and 55 were more likely to use strong expletives (*shit*, *damn*) than married women in the same age group.

In another study, Bailey and Timm (1976) used a self-report questionnaire to analyze the use of strong expletives by 15 males and 14 females between the ages of 19 and 61 at a university in California. The questionnaire called for participants' responses to 20 possible real-life situations. The results of this investigation showed that, while men used almost twice as many strong expletives as women overall, age was also a factor, especially in the number of strong expletives reported by female respondents. It was found that women under 34 used more than four times as many expletives per questionnaire as women over 42 did (an average of 8.1 expletives per questionnaire vs. 1.8 for women over 42); the difference between men in the corresponding age groups was much smaller (11.1 vs. 9.4). For both sexes, subjects in the 28 to 32 age group used the most expletives (F = 12.0; M = 14.7); in this age group the difference between the sexes in the mean use of expletives per questionnaire was minimal.

In another kind of study, Kramer's (1974) examination of the language contained in the captions of 156 *New Yorker* cartoons revealed that male cartoon characters swore more than six times as often as their female counterparts. Kramer noted also that men and women in the cartoons tended to swear for different reasons: while women used strong expletives only in situations where they were clearly provoked, men were inclined to swear for more trivial reasons. Kramer found, moreover, that subjects who were asked to judge the sex of the speaker in 49 cartoon captions tended to assign captions containing swear words such as *damn* to male rather than female speakers, a result which was duplicated in a similar study by Dyck (1992). The results of a later study by Kramer (Kramer, 1977) showed that the use of swearing was significantly identified as a characteristic of male speech by high school and university students of both sexes.

In another perception study, Edelsky (1976) showed that both adults and children, but especially the latter, were more likely to attribute statements containing strong expletives to men than to women. In addition, Garcia-Zamor (1973) and Fillmer and Haswell (1977) found that nursery school children (in the former study) and children in Grades 1 to 5 (in the latter) tended to associate statements containing swear words with male speech.

The available research on the use of swearing consists less of actual language analyses than of studies in the form of questionnaires which require people to assess their own and others' speech behaviour. The results of these perception studies show that people believe that men swear more than women in general, but when language users are given a context in which to evaluate their own use of swearing, as was the case in the study by Bailey and Timm, this perception is less unequivocal, with age becoming a significant factor. Studies of the use of swearing in actual conversation suggest that social factors may be involved as well, since the number of strong expletives used by both men and

women was shown to increase significantly in single sex groups (see Gomm, 1981).

2.2.7. Use of Hedges and Hesitations

While Lakoff contends that women are more likely than men to use hedges and hesitations in oral speech, and that such usage is an indication of tentativeness and deference on the part of the speaker, Jespersen suggests that it is men's language which is more likely to contain instances of these speech phenomena:

> ... it may serve as a sort of consolation to the other sex [i.e., women] that there are a much greater number of men than of women who cannot put two words together intelligently, who stutter and stammer and hesitate, and are unable to find suitable expressions for the simplest thought (1922, p. 253).

Empirical evidence on sex differentiation in the use of hedges and hesitations in English has shown varying results. In her examination of the language contained in soap opera dyads, Dyck (1990) found that female characters both paused more and used more hedges than male characters, although neither of these differences was significant. Crouch and Dubois (1977), on the other hand, found that hedges were more characteristically used by male than female students taking part in university graduate seminars.

In analyzing the language of description as used by male and female university students, Ursel (1989) found that, while no significant difference existed in the number of hesitations by males or females (although, as in the Crouch and Dubois study, men used slightly more), both men and women were more likely to hesitate when addressing a female experimenter than when the experimenter was male. Ursel found, moreover, that, contrary to Lakoff's claim, it was men who used more hedges in general.

The results of other studies fail to locate sex related differences in the use of these variables. Hirschman (1973), for example, found no significant differences in the number of hedges used in dyadic conversations between college men and women; similarly, Prideaux, Hogan, and Stanford (1992) found no significant differences in the number of pauses or hedges used by men and women in oral and written narratives.

A review of the available literature on sex-differentiation in the use of hedges and hesitations shows that these speech phenomena are sometimes found marginally more often in the language of men and sometimes in that of women; in general, though, significant differences have not been found to exist with respect to this variable. Many of the studies show, however, that there is a great deal of individual difference in its use by both male and female speakers. Regardless, the stereotype that women are more likely than men to hedge and hesitate persists.

2.2.8. Use of Empty Adjectives

Both Jespersen and Lakoff claim that women, more than men, have a tendency to make excessive use of a type of adjective referred to by Lakoff as "empty"; examples of such adjectives are *nice*, *pretty*, *adorable*, and *divine*. The use of such adjectives is said to be indicative of the "empty" or trivial topics ostensibly pursued by female speakers.

Kramer (1974) examined sex-differentiation in the use of adjectives in the context of written descriptions of two black and white photographs, and found that 17 male and 17 female college students did not differ significantly in either the number or the type of adjective used in their descriptions.[10]

Even though sex-based differences have not been found in such analyses of actual language, the perception that men and women differ in their use of adjectives exists. Kramer

[10] It is possible, of course, that oral descriptions may have yielded a different result.

found, for example, that female, but not male, cartoon characters tended to use such adjectives. Furthermore, when asked to rate the language in cartoon captions as representative of the speech of males or females (Kramer 1974; Dyck 1992), subjects not only tended to attribute captions containing adjectives such as those mentioned above to women, but, when asked to give reasons for their judgements, admitted that they believed such adjectives to be more likely to be used by women than by men. In another perception study, Edelsky (1976) found a very strong tendency for subjects from Grade 3 to adult to assign statements containing the adjective *adorable* categorically to females.

The results of these studies suggest that, although not corroborated by analyses of actual language use by men and women, the perception exists that women, but not men, tend to use so-called empty adjectives.

2.2.9. Use of Intensifiers

Jespersen claims that women are more likely than men to use intensifying adjectives that result from the addition of the suffix *-ly* to adverbs, as, for example, in the expressions *awfully pretty* and *terribly nice*. In addition, both Jespersen and Lakoff suggest that women make excessive use of the intensifiers *so* and *such*; Lakoff suggests that the effect of using these intensifiers is to lessen the impact or conviction of a statement.

In her examination of college students' written descriptions of black and white photographs, Kramer (1974) found no significant sex-related differences in the use of *-ly* adverbs.[11] Her analysis of the language found in 156 cartoons, however, revealed that, when intensifiers such as those mentioned above were used in the cartoon captions,

[11] It might be suggested that it is not the *-ly* ending, but the stem (i.e., the adjective from which this kind of adverb is made) that accounts for its presumed "female"-like quality; yet the empirical evidence does not show that males and females differ in their use of adjectives per se, at least not in written descriptions (see Kramer, 1974).

they tended to be used by females. In addition, the cartoon attribution studies by Kramer (1974) and Dyck (1992) showed that people did tend to assign such expressions to female speakers, both in their judgements of captions containing such language and in their reasons for assigning such statements to female speakers.

Edelsky (1976) found a variable tendency for adults and older primary children to assign statements containing the intensifier *so* to females, while Fillmer and Haswell (1977) found that 121 Grade 1 to 5 students tended to associate statements containing intensifiers *so* and *such* to females.

Again there is evidence of the existence of a stereotype that women use more intensifying adjectives than men, even though the stereotype is not corroborated in analyses of actual language usage.

2.2.10. Use of Hyperbole

Jespersen claims that women are more likely than men to use hyperbole. Although intensifiers, as discussed in the previous section, exemplify a form of hyperbole, it is also alleged that women, more than men, tend to use other forms of exaggeration in their speech. This claim can neither be corroborated nor denied since an extensive literature search failed to reveal any observational or empirical research that focussed on sex-differentiation with respect to the use of this variable.

2.2.11. Use of Euphemism

Jespersen claims that women are more likely to use euphemistic terms than men. It is alleged that women tend to be uncomfortable with terms dealing with death, body parts, bodily functions, and the like, and, in an effort to soften harsh reality, replace these terms with vaguer expressions; an example of this is the substitution of *the other place* for *hell*. Though women are generally considered to be preservers of language, this is one area, according to Jes-

persen, where it is women, and not men, who institute language change. When the resulting terms become widely used, they may eventually come to be regarded as undesirable and may in turn be replaced by a new euphemism. Again, a literature search failed to reveal the existence of studies testing sex-differentiation with respect to the use of this variable.

2.2.12. Use of Slang

While women are said to be the preservers of language, as noted in the section on the use of *grammatically proper forms*, men are seen as "the chief renovators of language" (Jespersen, 1922, p. 247) as a result of their propensity for inventing and using words which are initially branded as slang, but which often eventually find their way into the standard vocabulary. Jespersen suggests that the predilection of men to use, and women to refrain from using, slang is one of the "human secondary sexual characteristics" (p. 248), a view which is clearly also held by Flexner (1960), who suggests that males are predominantly the creators and users of slang because they have traditionally been the ones to be out and about in society while women's roles have forced them to stay at home. If this is indeed the reason for the perception that men are more likely than women to use slang, one would expect modern women to exhibit an increased usage of slang.

Specific studies of the existence of sex-differentiation in the use of slang in actual language were not found; however, one could reasonably expect similar results to those found in investigations of standard use of grammatical forms versus nonstandard or vernacular forms, such that the use of slang would tend to be more prevalent in tightly knit social groups of either sex.

Clearly, though, the perception exists that men use more slang than women. This was shown by Kramer (1977), who found that high school and university students significantly

judged the use of slang as being representative of male speech.

2.3. Synopsis of Literature Survey

The preceding survey reveals some interesting aspects about the variables under review. First, it should be noted that an extensive search failed to uncover any empirical evidence that investigated claims of sex-differentiation in the use of three of the twelve variables reviewed, namely *hyperbole*, *euphemism*, and *slang*. Of those variables for which observational or empirical evidence exists, two (*tag questions* and *hedges*) show variable results, four (*clausal complexity*, *incomplete sentences*, *empty adjectives*, and *intensifiers*) are refuted by the available evidence, and only three (*indirect requests*, *grammatically proper forms*, and *swearing*) show results in the predicted direction of sex-differentiation in use; it should be noted, however, that, with respect to the last group, the findings suggest that factors other than speaker sex may be involved: such factors include socialization, formality of the speech situation, relative power of the participants, and the like. Although the results of empirical studies fail to verify unequivocally claims with respect to sex-differentiation in the use of any of these variables, the stereotypes of sex-differentiation with respect to their use persist. The fact that people's perceptions of the way women and men use language are usually tested by questionable means such as those outlined in the previous chapter (perhaps such studies test people's knowledge of stereotypes rather than their perceptions of language use) motivates the researcher to examine people's judgements of the sex of the speaker in language samples that have been taken from actual discourse.

2.4. Hypothesis

The purpose of the present study is to examine people's perceptions of speaker sex in orthographically presented

passages from oral and written narrative discourse. Specifically, the following questions will be addressed: Will people, when presented with passages from narrative discourse in written form, have an opinion as to the sex of the speaker? To what degree will they show confidence in their ability to predict accurately the sex of the speaker?

In addition to these broad questions, there are others which must be asked. Do men and women differ in their assignment of particular (types of) speech characteristics to a specific sex? Are subjects influenced by whether the scale is anchored at the left as *1 = Male* or as *1 = Female*? Does the order in which the members of a pair of stimuli are presented (i.e., whether they judge the first or second member they read) influence subjects' judgements?

It is hypothesized that, given written samples of speech, subjects will not be able to predict with any degree of accuracy whether the speaker is male or female when such prediction must depend solely on the written form of the language contained in the passage. This hypothesis will be supported if, when asked to rate passages as more likely to have been spoken by a male or by a female, individual subjects consistently attribute half of the passages in any one condition (i.e., the marked or neutral versions of an individual variable) to a male speaker and half to a female speaker, and if, at the same time, the subjects indicate a low level of confidence in their ability to make such judgements.

2.5. Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an empirical foundation within which this hypothesis can be tested. To this end, the literature was reviewed with respect to the twelve variables which will be used to test the ability of native speakers to judge speaker sex. The methodology used to test the hypothesis is outlined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
METHOD

3.1. Subjects

Twenty native English speaking University of Alberta students served as the subjects for this experiment; all participated voluntarily and without pay. The subjects consisted of ten males and ten females ranging in age from 19 to 25.

3.2. Stimuli

To serve as stimuli for the experiment, eight passages were selected from written and spoken language to represent each of the twelve variables described above. For each of the resulting 96 samples, a neutralized version was then constructed by systematically altering the portion of the passage identified as associated with male or female speech. Each passage was changed minimally - in many cases it was only necessary to alter or delete a single word. These neutralized passages served as controls in the experiment. Thus, for each passage, one exemplar was intended to reflect a particular stereotype of, or association with, male or female language use, while the other was intended to reflect the absence of that stereotype. A thirteenth set of eight paired passages was added to act as a control. In this set, the two members of each pair again differed minimally, but neither contained any of the variables under investigation; both members of these passage pairs could be considered neutral in terms of stereotypical sex-differentiation in language use.

The resulting set of 104 paired passages (see Appendix A for a full listing) was randomized; the stimuli were then incorporated into a test booklet in the order of randomization with the restriction that every group of thirteen stimuli must contain a pair of passages for each of the thirteen variables. The order of presentation of the members within a

pair was also randomized such that, in exactly half of the stimuli, the neutral member was presented first, while in the other half, the male or female member (depending on the variable in question) was presented first. In each pair, one member was marked with an asterisk - this would indicate to the subject which member of the pair he or she was to judge. The marked member of a pair represented the neutral version of a passage in half of the stimulus pairs, and the male or female version in the other half; and it was presented as the first member of a pair in half of the stimuli, and as the last member in the other half.

A second booklet was prepared to contain the responses of individual subjects. This answer booklet contained, for each stimulus in the test booklet, a seven-point scale on which subjects would rate their judgements of the sex of the speaker of the marked stimulus passage. Half of the subjects made their judgements on a scale that was anchored as *1 = Male* and *7 = Female*, and the other half used a scale where *1 = Female* and *7 = Male*. Thus two scale conditions existed.

3.3. Experimental Task

Each of the subjects participating in the experiment was given a test booklet and an answer booklet, and received the following instructions:

> This experiment examines how men and women use language.
>
> You have been given two booklets. In the first booklet, you will find a number of pairs of statements or paragraphs. Some of these statements or paragraphs were spoken or written by men, and some were spoken or written by women. You will find that, for each pair, one passage is marked with an asterisk. Your task in this experiment is to judge whether the marked passage in each case is that of a male or a female.
>
> You are asked to read each pair of statements in the first booklet carefully. Then read the marked statement again, and decide whether you think it was originated by a woman or a man; indicate your judgement by circling a number from *1* to

7 on the corresponding scale in the answer booklet. If you feel strongly that it was a man, circle *1* (for *Male*). If you are certain that it was a woman, circle *7* (for *Female*). If you are less certain, circle *2* or *3* (for more *Male*-like), *5* or *6* (for more *Female*-like), or *4* if you really can't decide.[12] Please base your judgements on how you think men and women actually talk, not on how you think they should talk.

As a participant in this experiment, your identity will remain anonymous. Although examples from your answers to the questionnaire may be used as data in the analysis of this experiment, you will never be identified. Your data, if used, will be pooled with that from other subjects.

To begin with, please fill out the Subject Information Sheet[13] with which you have been provided. Then complete the three samples that appear on the first page of the test booklet by making the required judgements and indicating your judgements on the scales provided on the first page of your answer booklet.

Do you have any questions? If not, you may proceed with the experiment.

Subjects took on average 35 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.4. Analysis of Results

The data were tabulated and analyzed for subjects' responses, and a multiple factor repeated measures analysis of variance was conducted to test for significant differences due to the following factors:

(1) Scale: which of the two scales was used by the subject;
(2) Sex: the sex of the subject;
(3) Variable: which of the thirteen variables was being rated;
(4) Version: whether the neutral or marked version of a variable was being rated; and
(5) Order: whether the particular passage to be judged appeared as the first or second member of a stimulus pair.

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[12] The instructions received by subjects who responded on scales anchored as *1* = *Female*, *7* = *Male* were, of course, adjusted accordingly.

[13] On this sheet, subjects were asked to indicate their sex, age, and education.

Multiple comparisons (using Tukey's Highly Significant Difference tests) were conducted for those factors or interactions which showed significant differences.

3.5. Rationale for Methodology Used

The methodology outlined above was designed to test the hypothesis that native speakers of English are not able to identify the sex of the speaker of orthographically presented samples of actual spoken and written language. An attempt was made to select passages of varying lengths which also provided, as much as possible, some context for the variable under investigation. The selection of the particular passages chosen was not guided by the sex of the speaker since the primary concern of this study is one of perception of the way men and women use language, not of actual language use. Instead selection was based on the presence within a passage of one of the variables of stereotypic sex-differentiated usage being investigated here. Thus the stimuli do not necessarily consist of equal representation by male and female speakers. In addition, no attempt was made to control for formal versus informal language since, for the most part (see Lakoff, 1977), the claims with respect to sex-differentiation in the use of these variables pertain to spoken informal language rather than formal written language.

The results of the study are found in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

4.1. Analysis

The previous chapter explored a methodology used to test the hypothesis that people cannot identify the sex of a speaker when all they have access to is an orthographic representation of what was spoken or written. A multi-factor repeated measures analysis of variance was run to analyze the results of this experiment in terms of five factors: scale, sex of subject, variable, version, and order. The results of this analysis are the subject of this chapter.

4.2. Significant Interactions

The analysis of variance results showed no significant main effects for any of the five factors tested. A number of significant differences were, however, found in interactions among the various factors, and these are listed in Table 2 below, together with their F values and the level of significance attained by each.

Table 2
List of Significant Interactions

	Interaction	F Value	P
(1)	Scale X Sex of Subject	5.21	.0364
(2)	Scale X Variable	3.80	.0000
(3)	Scale X Version	25.82	.0001
(4)	Scale X Version X Subject Sex	4.76	.0443
(5)	Scale X Variable X Version	36.94	.0000
(6)	Scale X Variable X Order	2.27	.0104
(7)	Scale X Variable X Version X Sex	4.44	.0000
(8)	Scale X Variable X Version X Order	4.70	.0000

It can be seen from Table 2 that significant differences were found in eight interactions among the factors tested by the analysis of variance. Of these, five attained

a very high level of significance; these were the interactions between scale and variable; scale and version; scale, variable, and version; scale, sex, variable, and version; and scale, variable, version, and order. Interactions between scale and sex; scale, sex, and version; and scale, variable, and order were also significant, though at lower levels. The remainder of this chapter will consist of a discussion of these significant interactions.[14]

4.2.1. Scale X Sex of Subject ($F = 5.21$, $p < .05$)

Table 3
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale and Sex of Subject

	Male	Female
Scale 1	3.93	4.11
Scale 2	4.14	3.94

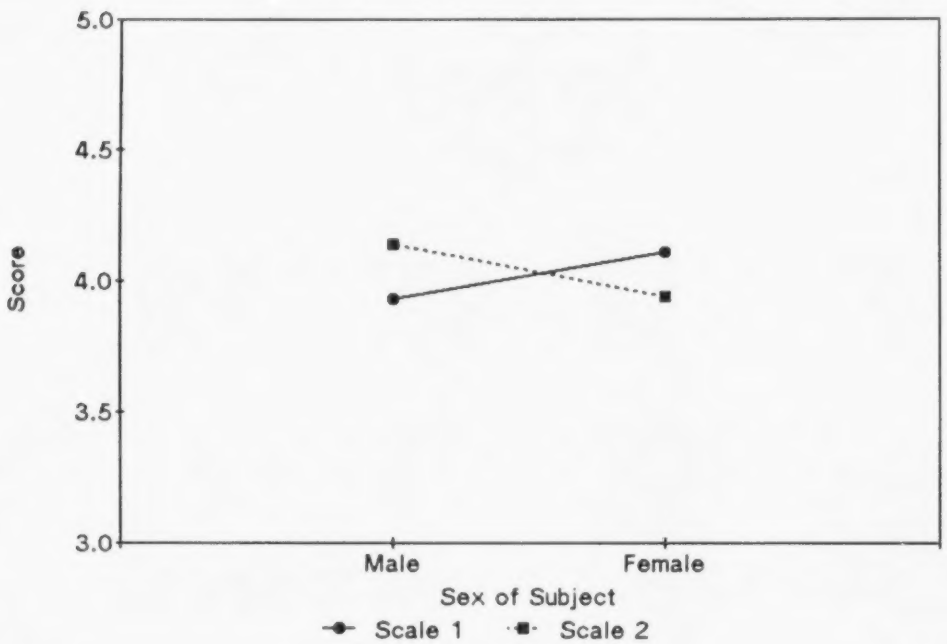
Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Table 3 contains the results of the interaction between the sex of the subject and the scale used by the subjects to indicate their judgements. Although the analysis of variance showed this interaction to be significant at the .05 level, pairwise comparisons (using Tukey's HSD tests) did not isolate any pairs that were significantly different. The factor of subject sex does, however, come into play in two other significant interactions (see items 4 and 7 in Table 2), and these will be discussed shortly.

[14] The results of the analysis of variance show that Scale was a determinant in every significant interaction among factors. This suggests that the analysis could be simplified by rescaling the individual scores obtained on Scale 2 to match Scale 1 criteria and subsequently running an analysis of variance on the four remaining factors. Such an analysis was in fact used in a paper based on this thesis and presented at the Twentieth Annual LACUS Forum in Chicago (see Dyck, 1993).

Even though pairwise comparisons did not abstract the significantly different pairs, the means in Table 3 show an overall tendency, on both scales, for the stimuli to be judged as more male-like by male subjects and more female-like by female subjects; this tendency can be seen in Figure 1 below. It should be remembered that the means in Table 3 reflect the combined judgements for both neutral and marked versions of all thirteen variables. As one would expect then, these overall means are situated very near the mid-point on both scales.

Figure 1
Interaction between Scale and Sex of Subject



4.2.2. Scale X Variable (F = 3.80, p <.00001)

Table 4 below contains the means for the highly significant interaction between scale and variable. Pairwise comparisons of the means in this table show that, of the thirteen variables, only variable 12 (*slang*) was rated significantly differently between scales (3.61 on Scale 1 and 4.56 on Scale 2). It should be remembered that the marked and

neutral versions of the stimuli are grouped together in this interaction, so one would not expect to find significant differences between means even if subjects rated the two versions differently.

Table 4
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale and Variable

Variable	Scale 1	Scale 2
1	3.94	3.96
2	3.86	4.13
3	4.05	4.24
4	4.11	4.00
5	4.06	3.99
6	4.01	4.25
7	3.88	4.23
8	4.03	3.75
9	4.36	3.74
10	4.28	3.74
11	4.23	3.86
12	3.61	4.56
13	3.80	4.10

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

4.2.3. Scale X Version (F = 25.85, p <.0001)

Table 5
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale and Version

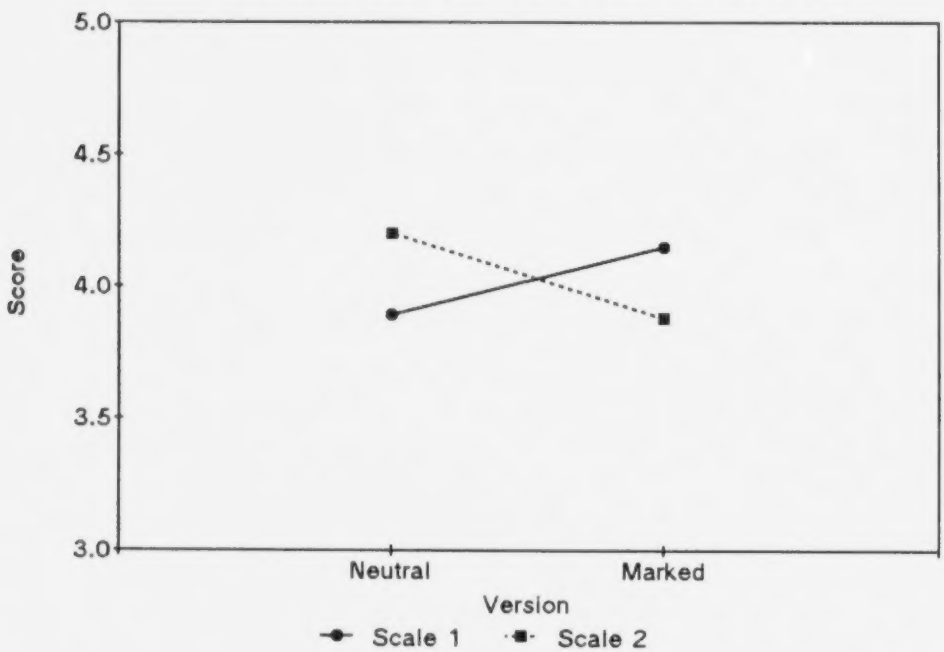
	Neutral	Marked
Scale 1	3.89	4.15
Scale 2	4.20	3.88

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Table 5 contains the means for the interaction between scale and stimulus version. These results show that, on both scales, the combined marked versions of stimulus passage pairs were judged as more female-like than the combined neutral versions. If, contrary to the hypothesis, subjects differentiated between the marked and neutral versions of variables, then such a result would be expected, since ten of the variables reflect stereotypic female language while only two reflect stereotypic male language. Correspondingly, the combined neutral versions were judged as more male-like on both scales.

Pairwise comparisons show that, on both scales, the combined marked versions of the variables received significantly different ratings than the combined neutral versions. Moreover, both neutral and marked versions of passages were judged significantly differently between scales. These results are displayed in chart form in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2
Interaction between Scale and Version



4.2.4. Scale X Version X Sex of Subject (F = 4.76, p <.05)

Table 6
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale, Version, and Sex of Subject

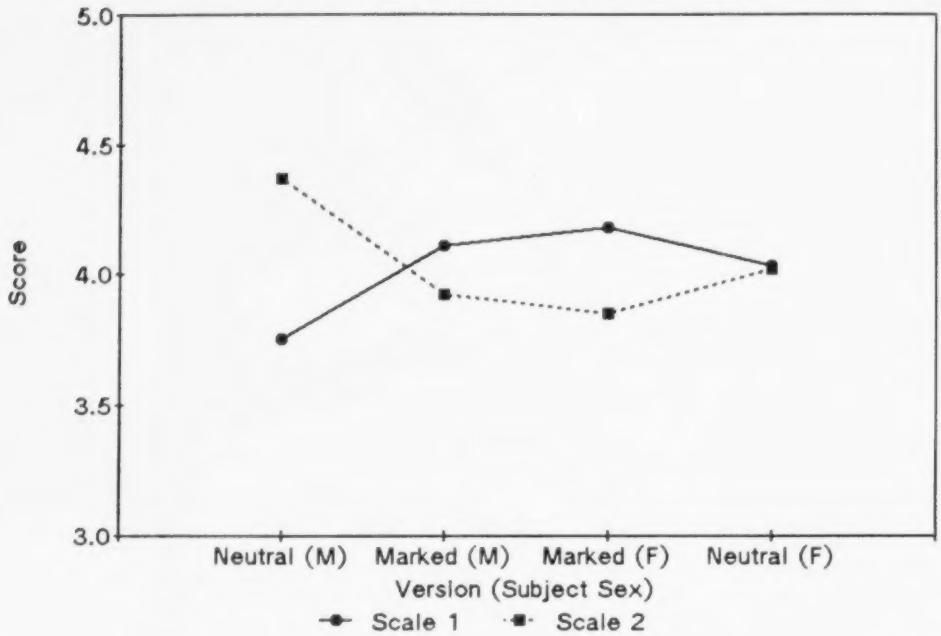
	Male		Female	
	Neutral	Marked	Neutral	Marked
Scale 1	3.75	4.11	4.03	4.18
Scale 2	4.37	3.92	4.02	3.85

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Table 6 contains the mean scores for the interaction between scale, stimulus version, and sex of subject. These results show that the spread between ratings for neutral and marked versions of variables was noticeably greater for male subjects than for female subjects on both scales. It is interesting to note that, on both scales, male subjects' ratings of neutral versions extended further from the midpoint than their ratings of marked versions. This was not the case for female subjects, whose mean scores for judgements of neutral versions on the two scales were almost identical (4.027 on Scale 1 and 4.023 on Scale 2). Male and female subjects did not differ significantly in how they judged marked versions of stimuli. These results can be seen more clearly in Figure 3 below.

It was observed in Table 5 that, overall, the neutral versions of the combined variables were judged to be more male-like on both scales. Table 6 shows that it was the male subjects who were responsible for this result.

Figure 3
Interaction between Scale, Subject Sex, and Version



It was noted earlier that the judgements of neutral and marked versions of variables by male subjects showed a greater spread than those by female subjects. Pairwise comparisons show that the difference in judgement between marked and neutral versions of stimuli was significant only for male subjects who made their judgements on Scale 2. It was noted, moreover, that male and female subjects differed in the way they assigned neutral versions of variables; pairwise comparisons did not, however, show this difference to be significant. The pairwise comparisons further indicate that male subjects judged only the neutral versions of stimuli significantly differently (more male-like) between scales, while the marked versions of stimuli were not rated significantly differently between scales by either sex. The reader is reminded that these results are based on the combined judgements for all thirteen variables and that female variables outnumber male variables in the stimuli.

4.2.5. Scale X Variable X Version (F = 36.94, p <.00001)

Table 7
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale, Variable, and Version

	Scale 1		Scale 2	
Variable	Neutral	Marked	Neutral	Marked
1	4.18	3.70	3.43	4.50
2	3.95	3.78	4.13	4.13
3	3.05	5.05	5.50	2.98
4	3.48	4.75	5.18	2.83
5	3.63	4.50	4.48	3.50
6	5.38	2.65	2.60	5.90
7	4.23	3.53	3.75	4.70
8	3.05	5.00	4.98	2.53
9	3.73	5.00	4.63	2.85
10	4.28	4.28	3.65	3.83
11	3.45	5.00	4.80	2.93
12	4.55	2.68	3.23	5.90
13	3.60	4.00	4.25	3.95

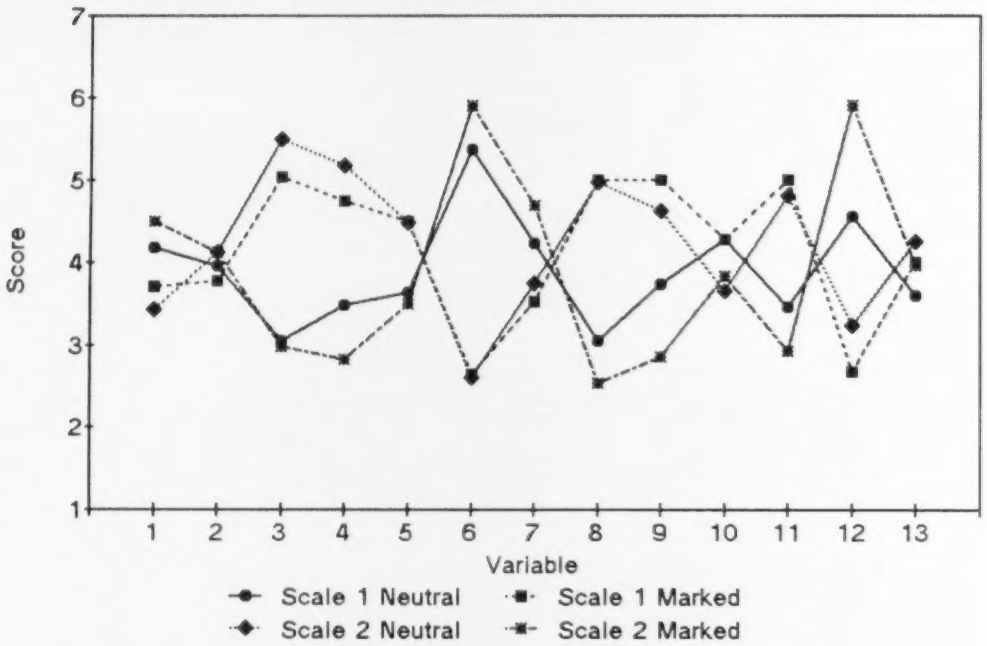
Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Table 7 contains the mean ratings for the interaction between scale, variable, and version. These results show that, on both scales, the neutral version of variable 6 (*swearing*) was rated most likely to have been spoken or written by a female, while the marked version of the same variable was judged to be most male-like (on Scale 2 this position was shared by variable 12 - *slang*). Again on both scales, the neutral version of variable 3 (*indirect request forms*) was judged to be most like male language (although, on Scale 1, this position was shared by variable 8 - *empty adjectives*), while the marked versions of variable 3 on Scale 1, and variable 8 on Scale 2, were rated most female-like.

Pairwise comparisons for the means in Table 7 show that, on both scales, judgements for marked and neutral ver-

sions were significantly different for three female variables (3 - *indirect request forms*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, and 11 - *euphemism*) as well as for both male variables (6 - *swearing*, and 12 - *slang*); on Scale 2, two additional female variables (9 - *intensifiers*, and 4 - *tag questions*) were judged significantly differently between versions. These results are shown more clearly in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4
Interaction between Scale, Variable, and Version



Multiple comparisons also show that, when subjects judged the marked versions of variables, seven (namely, the female variables 3 - *indirect request forms*, 4 - *tag questions*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 9 - *intensifiers*, and 11 - *euphemism*; and the male variables 6 - *swearing*, and 12 - *slang*) were rated significantly differently between scales; when the neutral version was judged, the ratings for six variables (3, 4, 6, 8, 11, and 12) differed significantly between scales.

It is further shown that, for marked versions on both scales, the male variables (6 - *swearing*, and 12 - *slang*) were judged significantly differently from seven of the ten female variables (3 - *indirect request forms*, 4 - *tag questions*, 5 - *grammatically proper forms*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 9 - *intensifiers*, 10 - *hyperbole*, and 11 - *euphemism*) as well as from the neutral control variable 13; on Scale 2, this difference included female variables 1 (*simple coordination to link sentences*) and 2 (*incomplete sentences*).

As well, the neutral version of variable 6 (*swearing*) was rated significantly differently from that of eight of the other variables (2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, and 13) on both scales; in contrast, ratings for the neutral version of the second male variable (12 - *slang*) differed significantly only from those of variables 3 (*indirect requests*) and 8 (*empty adjectives*) on Scale 1, and 3, 4, 8, 9, and 11 on Scale 2.

Further significant differences were found between the marked versions of female variables 1 (*simple coordination*) and 7 (*hedges)* on the one hand and 3 (*indirect request forms*), 8 (*empty adjectives*), 9 (*intensifiers*), and 11 (*euphemism*) on the other hand on both scales; on Scale 2, ratings for the marked versions of variables 1 and 7 also differed significantly from that of female variable 4 (*tag questions*). In addition, when judgements were made on Scale 2, the marked version of female variable 2 (*incomplete sentence*) was rated significantly differently from that of female variables 4, 8, and 9.

4.2.6. Scale X Variable X Order ($F = 2.27$, $p < .02$)

Table 8 below contains the mean scores for the interaction between scale, variable, and order of presentation. It was noted in the discussion of the interaction between scale and variable (see Table 4) that only variable 12 (*slang*) was rated significantly differently between scales when stimulus version was not a factor. Pairwise comparisons of the means

in Table 8 show that variable 12 was judged significantly differently between scales only in Order 1, that is, when the passage to be judged was presented as the first member of a stimulus pair. Order was also a factor in the judgement of variable 9 (*intensifiers*) in that this variable was again rated significantly differently between scales only in Order 1. It should be remembered that the means in Table 8 reflect the combined ratings received by neutral and marked versions of stimuli.

Table 8
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale, Variable, and Order

	Scale 1		Scale 2	
Variable	Order 1	Order 2	Order 1	Order 2
1	4.08	3.80	3.95	3.98
2	3.68	4.05	4.30	3.95
3	3.75	4.35	4.18	4.30
4	3.95	4.28	4.08	3.93
5	4.28	3.85	3.93	4.05
6	4.28	3.75	4.10	4.40
7	3.80	3.95	4.23	4.23
8	4.00	4.05	3.73	3.78
9	4.68	4.05	3.33	4.15
10	4.60	3.95	3.80	3.68
11	4.43	4.03	3.75	3.98
12	3.38	3.85	4.63	4.50
13	3.78	3.83	4.15	4.05

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7
Order 1: the first member of a passage pair was judged
Order 2: the second member of a passage pair was judged

4.2.7. Scale X Variable X Version X Sex (F=4.44, p <.00001)

Table 9 below shows the results of the interaction between scale, variable, version, and sex of subject. Mean by mean comparisons of these results show that male and female subjects did not differ significantly in the scores they as-

signed to stimuli in either version for any variable on either scale. Moreover, subjects of both sexes were generally found to be in agreement on the most male-like and the most female-like variables in both versions. The sexes did, however, differ in the number of variables rated significantly differently between scales, between versions, and between variables within a particular scale and version.

Table 9
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale, Variable, Version, and Sex of Subject

	Scale 1				Scale 2			
	Neutral		Marked		Neutral		Marked	
Variable	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	3.70	4.65	3.65	3.75	3.75	3.10	4.05	4.95
2	3.30	4.60	4.65	2.90	4.75	3.50	3.40	4.85
3	2.85	3.25	4.65	5.45	5.40	5.60	3.45	2.50
4	3.45	3.50	4.35	5.15	5.25	5.10	3.10	2.55
5	3.45	3.80	4.00	5.00	4.45	4.50	3.80	3.20
6	4.80	5.95	3.20	2.10	3.00	2.20	5.80	6.00
7	4.10	4.35	3.55	3.50	3.90	3.60	4.70	4.70
8	3.35	2.75	4.90	5.10	5.00	4.95	2.50	2.55
9	4.10	3.35	4.50	5.50	4.60	4.65	3.00	2.70
10	4.55	4.00	4.40	4.15	3.70	3.60	4.35	3.30
11	3.25	3.65	4.75	5.25	4.60	5.00	2.95	2.90
12	4.25	4.85	2.95	2.40	3.75	2.70	5.75	6.05
13	3.55	3.65	3.85	4.15	4.70	3.80	4.05	3.85

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Between scales, male subjects rated the neutral version of only one variable (variable 3 - *indirect request forms*) and the marked versions of three variables (6 - *swearing*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, and 12 - *slang*) significantly differently, while female subjects differentiated significantly between four neutral (3, 6, 8, and 12) and eight marked (2 - *incomplete sentences*, 3 - *indirect request forms*, 4 - *tag questions*, 6 - *swearing*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 9 - *intensi-*

fiers, 11 - *euphemism*, and 12 - *slang*) versions of variables.

Female subjects also rated a greater number of variables significantly differently between versions than male subjects did. On Scale 1 male subjects did not rate any of the variables significantly differently between versions, while female subjects differentiated significantly between versions for five variables (variables 3 - *indirect request forms*, 6 - *swearing*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 9 - *intensifiers*, and 12 - *slang*). On Scale 2, both male and female subjects judged neutral and marked versions differently for five variables (variables 3, 4 - *tag questions*, 6, 8, and 12), while female subjects differentiated significantly between versions for three additional variables (namely, variables 2 - *incomplete sentences*, 9 - *intensifiers*, and 11 - *euphemism*).

On Scale 1, female subjects were largely responsible for the differences in judgements between male and female variables in both versions. While, in the neutral version, male subjects differentiated significantly only between male variable 6 (*swearing*) and female variable 3 (*indirect request forms*), female subjects judged seven additional variables significantly differently from variable 6; these were female variables 4 (*tag questions*), 5 (*grammatically proper forms*), 8 (*empty adjectives*), 9 (*intensifiers*), 10 (*hyperbole*), and 11 (*euphemism*), and the neutral control variable 13. When the marked versions of variables were judged on Scale 1, female subjects again differentiated significantly between the same variables; in addition, they rated the marked versions of male variable 12 (*slang*) significantly differently from those of female variables 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 11, while male subjects differentiated significantly only between variables 12 (*slang*) and 8 (*empty adjectives*).

In the neutral version as judged on Scale 2 male subjects rated male variable 6 (*swearing*) significantly differ-

ently from female variables 3 (*indirect request forms*), 4 (*tag questions*), and 8 (*empty adjectives*), while female subjects differentiated significantly between male variables 6 and 12 (*slang*) on one hand and female variables 3, 4, 5 (*grammatically proper forms*), 8, 9 (*intensifiers*), and 11 (*euphemism*) on the other. When the marked versions of variables were judged on Scale 2, both male and female subjects rated the male variables (6 - *swearing*, and 12 - *slang*) significantly differently from six of the ten female variables (3 - *indirect request forms*, 4 - *tag questions*, 5 - *grammatically proper forms*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 9 - *intensifiers*, and 11 - *euphemism*); in addition, male subjects also rated variable 2 (*incomplete sentences*), and female subjects rated variable 10 (*hyperbole*), significantly differently from the male variables.

Where variables 1 (*simple coordination*), 2 (*incomplete sentences*), and/or 7 (*hedges*) were rated significantly differently from one or more of the other female variables, as was seen in Table 7, such differences are shown in Table 9 to be the result of judgements by female subjects.

In general, these results demonstrate that the male subjects who participated in this study tended to be more conservative in their judgements than the female subjects, and that subjects of both sexes tended to be more conservative when Scale 1 (where *1 = Male* and *7 = Female*) was used to record judgements than when Scale 2 (where *1 = Female* and *7 = Male*) was used.

4.2.8. Scale X Variable X Version X Order (F = 4.70, p <.00001)

Table 10 below shows the mean ratings for the interaction between scale, variable, version, and order. Pairwise comparisons of these means show that only two neutral versions of variables were judged significantly differently between scales regardless of order of presentation: these were variables 3 (*indirect request forms*) and 6 (*swearing*). When

in Order 1, the neutral version of variable 4 (*tag questions*) was also judged significantly differently between scales; however, when presented in Order 2 (i.e., when the second member of a passage pair was judged), the neutral versions of variables 8 (*empty adjectives*), 9 (*intensifiers*), 11 (*euphemism*), and 12 (*slang*) were rated significantly differently between scales.

Table 10
Mean Scores for the Interaction between Scale, Variable, Version, and Order

	Scale 1				Scale 2			
	Neutral		Marked		Neutral		Marked	
	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order
Variable	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	4.10	4.25	4.05	3.35	3.40	3.45	4.50	4.50
2	3.65	4.25	3.70	3.85	4.30	3.95	4.30	3.95
3	2.75	3.35	4.75	5.35	5.60	5.40	2.75	3.20
4	2.90	4.05	5.00	4.50	5.45	4.90	2.70	2.95
5	3.90	3.35	4.65	4.35	4.45	4.50	3.40	3.60
6	5.25	5.50	3.30	2.00	2.55	2.65	5.65	6.15
7	4.25	4.20	3.35	3.70	4.00	3.50	4.45	4.95
8	3.50	2.60	4.50	5.50	4.55	5.40	2.90	2.15
9	4.00	3.45	5.35	4.65	4.15	5.10	2.50	3.20
10	4.60	3.95	4.60	3.95	3.90	3.40	3.70	3.95
11	4.05	2.85	4.80	5.20	4.55	5.05	2.95	2.90
12	4.45	4.65	2.30	3.05	3.35	3.10	5.90	5.90
13	3.50	3.70	4.05	3.95	4.05	4.45	4.25	3.65

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7
Order 1: the first member of a passage pair was judged
Order 2: the second member of a passage pair was judged

In contrast, when the marked version of a variable was judged, the order of presentation of the stimuli did not affect such judgement for any of the variables: the marked versions of seven variables (namely, variables 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12) were judged significantly differently between scales regardless of the order of presentation.

Score for score, pairwise comparisons showed significant differences only when judgement was made on Scale 1, where the neutral version of variable 11 (*euphemism*), as well as the marked version of variable 6 (*swearing*), were judged significantly differently between orders.

On Scale 1, subjects differentiated significantly between versions for four variables regardless of order; these were variables 3 (*indirect request forms*), 6 (*swearing*), 9 (*intensifiers*), and 12 (*slang*). Four more variables were judged significantly differently between versions depending on order: these were variables 8 (*empty adjectives*) and 11 (*euphemism*) in Order 1; and variables 4 (*tag questions*) and 9 (*intensifiers*) in Order 2.

On Scale 2, subjects differed significantly between versions for seven variables regardless of order: these were variables 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12. In addition, the neutral and marked versions of variable 7 (*hedges*) were rated significantly differently when the stimuli were presented in Order 1.

Ratings for a number of variables differed between scales in that they were significant only in one order. The neutral version of variable 4 (*tag questions*) was rated significantly differently between scales only in Order 1 and the neutral versions of variables 8 (*empty adjectives*), 9 (*intensifiers*), 11 (*euphemism*), and 12 (*slang*) only in Order 2. The marked version of variable 5 (*grammatically proper forms*) differed significantly between scales only in Order 1, and that of variable 7 (*hedges*) only in Order 2.

The neutral versions of two variables (3 and 6), and the marked versions of seven (3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12) were rated significantly differently between scales regardless of order of presentation.

4.3. Summary of Results

Although the analysis of variance showed no significant main effects for any of the five factors tested here, a num-

ber of significant interactions were found to occur. For ease of reference, the major interactions are summarized here.

The factors of scale and version were shown to interact significantly: ratings for the neutral and marked versions of the combined variables differed significantly between scales and, in addition, the two versions were rated significantly differently on each scale. When the factor of subject sex interacted with scale and version, it was shown that male and female subjects differed significantly in their judgements, with male subjects rating only the neutral versions of stimuli significantly differently between scales and female subjects rating neither version significantly differently between scales.

When the factor of variable interacted with those of scale and version, it was shown that, for five variables on Scale 1 and seven on Scale 2, subjects differentiated significantly between the neutral and marked versions of variables; moreover, the marked versions of seven of the twelve variables were rated significantly differently between scales. In addition, the marked versions of the two male variables received significantly different ratings from those of seven of the ten female variables. These results are presented in summary form in Table 11 below.

When subject sex was included in this interaction, it was shown that, although male and female subjects did not differ significantly in their ratings of either version of any individual variable on either scale, female subjects tended to exhibit a greater range in their ratings between the two versions of stimuli than their male counterparts. This was especially evident when judgements were made on Scale 1, where the five variables which were shown to be rated significantly differently between versions were all a result of the judgements of female subjects: male subjects did not differentiate significantly between versions for any of the variables on Scale 1. On Scale 2, although subjects

of both sexes rated three variables significantly differently between versions, females did so for three additional variables.

Table 11
Summary of Subjects' Ratings of Speaker Sex

Variable	Scale 1 Neutral	Scale 1 Marked	Scale 2 Neutral	Scale 2 Marked
1 (F)	N	M	F	M
2 (F)	N	N	N	N
3 **(F)****	**M***	**F***	**M***	**F***
4 **(F)**	**M**	**F**	**M***	**F***
5 **(F)**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**
6 **(M)****	**F***	**M***	**F***	**M***
7 (F)	N	M	N	M
8 **(F)****	**M***	**F***	**M***	**F***
9 **(F)**	**M**	**F**	**M***	**F***
10 (F)	F	F	F	N
11 **(F)****	**M***	**F***	**M***	**F***
12 **(M)****	**F***	**M***	**F***	**M***
13 (N)	M	**N**	**N**	**N**

Scale 1: M = 1, F = 7
Scale 2: F = 1, M = 7

Notes:
1. *M* or *F* in a cell indicates consensus that a version of a variable was spoken by a Male or a Female; *N* indicates a mean score of within 0.25 (inclusive) of the midpoint of 4.
2. **M**, **F**, or **N** (in bold print) indicates that the mean score was in the direction suggested by stereotype.
3. An asterisk (*) indicates a significant difference in judgements between versions of a variable on a scale.
4. A double asterisk (**) indicates a significant difference in judgements between versions of a variable on both scales.

Order of presentation was also found to interact significantly with scale and variable in that two variables were rated significantly differently between scales only

when the first member of a stimulus pair was judged (i.e., in Order 1).

When stimulus version was included in this interaction, the neutral and marked versions of four variables on Scale 1 and one variable on Scale 2 were judged significantly differently in one order but not the other. Between scales, order of presentation was a significant factor (for five variables) only when the neutral versions of variables were judged; when the marked versions were judged, the order in which the members of a passage pair were presented did not play a significant role.

4.4. Summary

The focus in this chapter has been on a systematic presentation and surface interpretation of the data which resulted from statistical analyses of the results of the experiment undertaken in this project. In the chapter to follow, these findings will be interpreted in terms of the stated hypothesis and, in conjunction with previous research in the area, conclusions will be drawn and implications suggested for future research.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Hypothesis Refuted

The hypothesis tested in this experiment was that native speakers of English would be unable to predict the sex of the speaker of orthographically-presented samples of oral and written discourse. The results reported in the previous chapter show that the null hypothesis is refuted. When the mean scores for all variables in combination were considered, it was found that the neutral and marked versions were judged significantly differently both within and between scales. When the mean scores for individual variables were examined, it was shown that, for the majority of the variables tested (eight of twelve), subjects judged passages containing variables stereotypically associated with female language use as more likely to have been spoken by a female, and passages containing variables stereotypically associated with male language use as more likely to have been spoken by a male. Moreover, subjects on both scales judged the neutral versions of these variables as typical of the speech of the other sex. This trend proved to be significant for five variables (3 - *indirect request forms*, 6 - *swearing*, 8 - *empty adjectives*, 11 - *euphemism*, and 12 - *slang*) on Scale 1 and seven (3, 4 - *tag questions*, 6, 8, 9 - *intensifiers*, 11, and 12) on Scale 2. The marked versions of these variables were also rated significantly differently between scales, and, furthermore, the marked versions of the two male variables were rated significantly differently from all but three of the female variables. Regardless of which scale they used to record their judgements, subjects clearly differentiated between male and female use of language with respect to the majority of variables tested here.

The results also show a relatively clear polarization of subjects' judgements, with marked versions of variables being judged as either male- or female-like (depending on

the particular variable) and their neutralized counterparts being judged as typical of the speech of the opposite sex rather than as neutral. This polarization is possibly an artifact of the task, since subjects were instructed to circle *4* on the seven-point scale only if they really were unable to decide on the sex of the speaker of a stimulus passage. Nevertheless, this is an interesting result, since subjects never judged both versions of a single passage. On the other hand, they were always *exposed* to both versions of a passage, and the instructions may, in effect, have primed the subject to regard one member of each passage pair as typical of male speech and the other as typical of female speech. As suggested in Chapter 1, such a tendency to polarize when it comes to sex is not unusual. Sex is a binary feature: if sex is relevant, the choices are limited to *male* and *female*. When it comes to language, though, it is possible to conceive of utterances as capable of being spoken by members of either (or, for that matter, neither) sex. One could reasonably expect such utterances, then, to be judged neutrally in terms of speaker sex. For most of the variables under examination here, however, this was clearly not the case: where the marked version of a variable was clearly judged as typical of one of the sexes, the neutral version was clearly judged as typical of the other sex.

Of the other four variables under investigation here, one (namely, variable 2 - *incomplete sentences*) was rated neutrally (i.e., within 0.25 of the midpoint of the scale) in both versions on both scales, while the marked version of variable 10 (*hyperbole*) was rated as neutral on Scale 2. The marked versions of two of the variables (namely, variables 1 - *simple coordination to link sentences*, and 7 - *hedges*) show a reversed trend to that noted above, with subjects on both scales assigning the marked versions of female variables to male speakers; the polarization trend does not hold here, though, since the neutral versions of these variables were not necessarily assigned to female speakers.

The extent to which subjects on both scales agreed with one another, particularly with respect to their judgements of the marked versions of variables, becomes clear when the mean scores are rank ordered. The mean ratings of marked variables are ordered by scale from most male-like to most female-like below:

Scale 1:	6	12	7	1	2	13	10	5	4	(11,	9,	8) 3
Scale 2:	(6,	12)	7	1	2	13	10	5	3	11	9	4 8

Although subjects in general were largely in agreement, male and female subjects differed in the way they rated the stimuli, with females tending to be somewhat more extreme in their judgements than males. The sexes differed also in the way they rated the neutralized (but not the marked) versions of variables, with males judging them significantly differently between scales while females judged them similarly (and neutrally). The male subjects in this study tended to exhibit stereotyping on *neutral* forms, a tendency which is lacking in the judgements of *marked* (for the most part, *female*) forms. This suggests that males are responsible for stereotyping in the use of language as examined here. Perhaps it is true, as Lakoff (1975) claims, that jokes about women's use of language are typically invented by men.

5.2. Summary of Results with Respect to Individual Variables

At this point, it is useful to provide a summary of the results of this study with respect to the individual variables under investigation and to compare the results with claims about their use.

Variables 1 and 2. Contrary to stereotype and to the claims of Jespersen, the subjects who participated in this study did not concede that the use of *simple coordination to link sentences and clauses* (variable 1) or the *failure to complete sentences* (variable 2) are the domain of female speech. The marked versions of these variables were actually treated as marginally more male- than female-like. It is of

interest that the sexes disagreed in their judgements of passages containing *incomplete sentences*, with male subjects rating them more like female speech and female subjects rating them more like male speech; this resulted in a combined neutral rating for the variable.

Variable 3. The strong consensus that the use of *indirect request forms* is typical of female speech conforms with stereotype and with Lakoff's claims, even though empirical evidence has not demonstrated conclusively that this usage can accurately be attributed to speaker sex alone, since factors such as the relative power of conversational participants may also play a role.

Variable 4. Even though empirical evidence fails to support claims made by Lakoff that female speakers are more likely than male speakers to use *tag questions*, the subjects in this study appear to believe that they are.

Variable 5. The empirical evidence offers some support for claims made by both Jespersen and Lakoff that women are more likely than men to use *grammatically proper forms*; there is a possibility, however, that, rather than being solely a matter of sex-differentiated language use, the use of standard forms may, at least in part, be influenced by social factors. The results of the present study do indicate a tendency for native English speakers to rate language containing syntactically proper forms as typical of female speech.

Variable 6. Although it is not clear from the existing empirical evidence that the greater use of *swearing* can be unequivocally linked with the speech of males (age and socialization may also play roles), the subjects in this study strongly associated the use of swearing with male speakers; this was in accordance with stereotype and with the claims of both Lakoff and Jespersen.

Variable 7. Contrary to both Lakoff's and Jespersen's claims, the ratings given to passages containing *hedges* were judged relatively neutrally. This is in accordance with the

empirical evidence, which fails, with any degree of consistency, to link the use of hedges and hesitations with one sex or the other.

Variable 8. The existing empirical evidence does not show that males and females differ in their use of adjectives; nevertheless, Lakoff's claim that women are more likely than men to use *empty adjectives* was supported in this perception study.

Variable 9. The use of *intensifiers* has been linked to female speakers by both Jespersen and Lakoff, and this stereotype, although not supported by empirical evidence, is upheld by the subjects in this study.

Variable 10. Jespersen has claimed that women are more likely than men to use *hyperbole*. The subjects in the present study did not agree with this stereotype: passages containing hyperbole were judged to be relatively neutral with respect to speaker sex.

Variable 11. The subjects in this study agreed strongly with Jespersen's claim that female speakers are more likely than male speakers to use *euphemistic expressions*.

Variable 12. Jespersen's claims with respect to male use of *slang* were also supported in this perception study.

5.3. Conclusion

It is evident from the discussion in the preceding sections that, even though the stimuli used in this study consisted of language samples taken from actual discourse, the results of this study conformed to the results of other perception studies and to stereotype in that discourse passages containing certain features of "women's language" (specifically, *the use of indirect request forms*, *tag questions*, *empty adjectives*, *intensifiers*, and *euphemism*) and passages containing features often associated with male language (the use of *swearing* and *slang*) were strongly identified according to stereotype.

These results suggest that, at least for some of the variables stereotypically associated with male or female language use, and within the limited scope of the present study, the sex of the speaker of discourse passages is, contrary to the hypothesis investigated here, predictable by the language contained in them. In spite of the fact that empirical studies have failed to provide conclusive evidence that men and women use the English language differently, that perception nevertheless appears to exist.

5.4. Implications

The question that must be addressed, then, is this: Why, when empirical research fails to provide conclusive evidence that men and women in our society talk differently, do people continue to ascribe to the belief that they do? Is the research methodology faulty? Lakoff (1975, pp. 58-59) suggests that if researchers fail to find significant differences in the way men and women talk, it is because they are looking for evidence in the wrong places, for example, by examining writing samples, cartoon captions, and the like. As Lakoff points out, the characteristics of speech which form "women's language" are indicative of informal, usually oral, rather than formal written language. It is a matter of record, however, that a number of researchers (e.g., Kramer, 1974; Swacker, 1975; Ursel, 1989; Prideaux, Hogan, & Stanford, 1992) have examined oral language in the form of descriptions of pictures or movie clips, in various situations (into a tape recorder, to an experimenter or a friend of either sex, or to a female stranger) and have found little or no evidence of sex-differentiation with respect to the characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to female speech.

Even if no woman actually uses this style of language, Lakoff claims, some form of it is used by "almost every woman you see in the media" (p. 59) and this cannot help but have some influence on how women and girls talk. But at

least one examination of the language contained in a soap opera (a sure source of stereotypic language use, one might argue) revealed no significant differences in the way men and women talked (see Dyck, 1990).

Coates (1986) and others have speculated that hypotheses about sex-differentiation in language use may result, at least in part, from the unequal comparison of women's spoken language to men's written language. This would explain why women's language is often seen to fall short of some assumed "norm" (i.e., men's language), since spoken language tends to be less formal than written language. If this could be verified, it would explain why tests of oral language as used by male and female speakers of English consistently fail to support stereotypes of sex-based differences in language use.

A plausible explanation for the continued persistence of subjects in identifying sex-differentiating characteristics in language where none apparently exist has been suggested by Kramer (1977), who posits that people tend to make use of stereotyping when attempting to deal with initial interactions in unfamiliar situations; thus, when asked to make evaluations in a situation or of an individual (or passage of speech, in this instance) with which they are not familiar, people tend to rely on stereotype to help them organize or fit the person or situation into a groove.

Whatever the explanation, this study clearly shows that young adult male and female subjects do continue to identify certain characteristics of speech as more typical of one sex than the other. The hypothesis that native speakers of English would not be able accurately to predict the sex of the speaker of discourse samples presented in written form was not supported in the present research, since, at least for the variables under consideration here, native speakers of English were able to make such predictions with some confidence.

It is clear from the results of this study that the subjects acted as if differences exist in the way men and women use language. What is not clear, however, is whether they actually believed such differences to exist. Could it be that the methods whereby researchers commonly attempt to measure people's perceptions of sex-differentiation in language use in fact simply measure people's knowledge of stereotypes about such language use? The comments offered by some of the subjects who took part in this study suggest that this may be the case. More than half of the subjects reported that the experiment made them feel uncomfortable, even sexist; they felt that, in performing the required judgements, they were being guilty of sex-stereotyping, and that their responses were not necessarily realistic. Some of these comments are offered below:

> I felt that I was being biased - I didn't think that my answers were fair nor accurate (A-M5).
>
> I felt that the judgements that I made were on stereotypical images of yesterday and this made me somewhat uncomfortable because I know in some of the cases it could have been a female as well as a male speaking (ie) females swear alot today, too (A-F4).
>
> The experiment evoked many stereotypes of speech patterns in me (B-M5).
>
> It's a rather unfair experiment; it's based on generalizations and stereotypes (B-F3).
>
> I felt like [the experiment] was forcing me to be subjective and sexist (A-M1).

Nevertheless, when asked on what they based their judgements, many of the subjects identified language that was flowery, vague, grammatically correct, polite, and trivializing as typical of female speech, and language that was crude, blunt, and forceful, and which contained incidences of swearing and slang, as typical of male speech. These are stereotypes of sex-differentiated language usage. It appears, then, that the subjects in this study made use of

traditional notions of sex-differentiation in language use in their judgements of speaker sex. It is not clear, however, that they did so because they believed that the stereotypes of how men and women talk characterize how they actually talk; rather they seemed to be aware they were accessing stereotypic information in making the required judgements but felt somehow constrained to do so by the nature of the task. Perhaps they simply utilized the only method whereby they felt they could perform a task of this nature: that is, by accessing their knowledge of stereotypes.

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APPENDIX A

STIMULI

Factor 1: Use of Simple Coordination to Link Sentences and Clauses

Passage 1 - #71

*N: Last year, I went to Italy for six months. When I came back in September, my steady no longer took me for granted.

F: Last year, I went to Italy for six months. I came back in September and my steady no longer took me for granted.

Passage 2 - #85

*N: After George left, Leslie took her book down into the living room, where Eric sat watching a country-and-western singer on television.

F: George left and Leslie took her book down into the living room, where Eric sat watching a country-and-western singer on television.

Passage 3 - #12

F: I invested because I read the play and felt that someone had managed to capture the essence of Lona and had created a character who was funny and vulnerable and willful and impossible and sympathetic all at the same time.

*N: I invested because, on reading the play, I felt that someone had managed to capture the essence of Lona: someone had created a character who was funny, vulnerable, willful, impossible, and sympathetic all at the same time.

Passage 4 - #101

F: He slapped her and then they got into an argument.

*N: After he slapped her, they got into an argument.

Passage 5 - #62

*F: He was new to the district, so he had few friends.

N: Because he was new to the district, he had few friends.

Passage 6 - #50

*F: All he does at night is watch the Johnny Carson show and then he just falls into bed and goes to sleep and won't even give her a tumble.

N: All he does at night is watch the Johnny Carson show; then he just falls into bed and goes to sleep; he won't even give her a tumble.

Passage 7 - #34

N: If you asked her a direct question, you got a direct answer; she never made excuses.
*F: You asked her a direct question and you got a direct answer. And she never made excuses.

Passage 8 - #20

N: Because she was a woman of principle, even her opponents respected her.
*F: She was a woman of principle and even her opponents respected her.

Factor 2: Use of Incomplete Sentences

Passage 1 - #29

*N: I'm not sure whether she was a lawyer or what. I don't know what she was.
F: I'm not sure whether she was a - a lawyer or whether she was a - maybe a - I don't know.

Passage 2 - #63

*N: What could I do? The children had to be protected.
F: What could I do ... The children ...

Passage 3 - #78

F: I just met him, but he seems - Well, you know.
*N: I just met him, but he seems all right.

Passage 4 - #84

F: If I didn't know you better, I would think - Oh, never mind.
*N: If I didn't know you better, I would think that you didn't care what happened to me.

Passage 5 - #52

*F: I wonder - If you could understand a little more about the way things were when the two of them were finishing college ...
N: I wonder if you wouldn't feel differently if you could understand a little more about the way things were when the two of them were finishing college.

Passage 6 - #2

*F: Thank you very much for all the trouble. It's just that I - one doesn't know -
N: Thank you very much for all the trouble. It's just that I can't judge my own writing; one doesn't know how to be objective about one's own work.

Passage 7 - #93

N: They were giving each other rubdowns at the beginning. He slapped her, and then they got into an argument.
*F: It was about - They were giving each other rubdowns at the beginning, and then they got to a - He slapped her, and then they got into an argument.

Passage 8 - #16

N: Where did you hear that? I can't begin to tell you how it makes me feel to hear you say such a thing.
*F: Where did you hear ... I can't begin to tell you how ...

Factor 3: Use of Indirect Requests

Passage 1 - #56

*N: Where did you hear that gossip about my sister?
F: Would you mind telling me where you heard that gossip about my sister?

Passage 2 - #37

*N: Who's calling?
F: May I ask who's calling?

Passage 3 - #103

F: I wonder if I could ask you to stop by my office before you leave for the day?
*N: Please stop by my office before you leave for the day.

Passage 4 - #40

F: Won't you please tell me what's bothering you?
*N: What's bothering you?

Passage 5 - #77

*F: Mrs. Holmes, would you permit me to ask you a few questions?
N: Mrs. Holmes, I'm going to ask you a few questions.

Passage 6 - #91

*F: Could you close the door on your way out?
N: Close the door on your way out.

Passage 7 - #14

N: I'm going to ask you a few questions about the factory.
*F: Would you allow me to ask you a few questions about the factory?

Passage 8 - #9

N: Tell me what happened.
*F: I'm anxious to know anything you may care to tell me about what happened.

Factor 4: Use of Tag Questions

Passage 1 - #10

*N: If they pass those laws they're talking about, it will hit you hard.
F: If they pass those laws they're talking about, it will hit you hard, won't it?

Passage 2 - #81

*N: Keep me posted on any new developments.
F: You'll keep me posted on any new developments, right?

Passage 3 - #49

F: That nephew of yours has certainly turned out well, hasn't he?
*N: That nephew of yours has certainly turned out well.

Passage 4 - #18

F: You like him a lot, don't you, little sister?
*N: You seem to like him a lot, little sister.

Passage 5 - #74

*F: No, let's go now. It's horrible to be late, don't you think?
N: No, let's go now. It's horrible to be late.

Passage 6 - #57

*F: I guess we'll just have to try a little harder to understand each other's point of view from now on, won't we?
N: I guess we'll just have to try a little harder to understand each other's point of view from now on.

Passage 7 - #100

N: Have you been to Paris? It's a beautiful city.
*F: Have you been to Paris? It's a beautiful city, isn't it?

Passage 8 - #39

N: Surely you're not worried about my meeting and getting involved with someone else while I'm away.
*F: You're not worried about my meeting and getting involved with someone else while I'm away, are you?

Factor 5: Use of Grammatically Proper Forms

Passage 1 - #89

*N: You wanted to know who was responsible for this mess? It was me.
F: You wanted to know who was responsible for this mess? It was I.

Passage 2 - #98

*N: I will not describe the circumstances of our meeting, or even attempt to physically describe her.
F: I will not describe the circumstances of our meeting, or even attempt to describe her physically.

Passage 3 - #1

F: I stood looking after her for a moment in dismay, and then went on to Terry's. What had I said to upset her so?
*N: I stood looking after her for a moment in dismay, and then went on to Terry's. What had I said to so upset her?

Passage 4 - #76

F: One day Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was sitting around with nothing to do with his enormous intellect, when it dawned on him. "Say," he said to Margot Kidder, whom he was dating at the time, "it's time for a new constitution."
*N: One day Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was sitting around with nothing to do with his enormous intellect, when it dawned on him. "Say," he said to Margot Kidder, who he was dating at the time, "it's time for a new constitution."

Passage 5 - #64

*F: Whom did you wish to speak to?
N: Who did you wish to speak to?

Passage 6 - #26

*F: Most of the other actors have had more experience than I and make fun of my stage fright.
N: Most of the other actors have had more experience than me and make fun of my stage fright.

Passage 7 - #30

N: How has this problem been dealt with up till now? We need to closely examine what has been attempted in the

past in order to come up with workable solutions for the future.

*F: How has this problem been dealt with up till now? We need to examine closely what has been attempted in the past in order to come up with workable solutions for the future.

Passage 8 - #44

N: How could they do that to you? If I was you, I wouldn't take it lying down.

*F: How could they do that to you? If I were you, I wouldn't take it lying down.

Factor 6: Use of Swearing

Passage 1 - #80

*N: Why can't you just leave me alone?

M: Why the bloody hell can't you just leave me alone?

Passage 2 - #11

*N: What is happening in this town!

M: What the hell is happening in this goddamned town!

Passage 3 - #66

M: I've felt like this every damn day for the whole bloody year.

*N: I've felt like this every day for the whole year.

Passage 4 - #21

M: You sure picked a hell of a time to tell me all this! Why, in God's name, couldn't you have told me before?

*N: You sure picked a fine time to tell me all this! Why couldn't you have told me before?

Passage 5 - #99

*M: How much money did you invest in that goddamn play?

N: How much money did you invest in that play?

Passage 6 - #28

*M: It's damned hard to see him every day, and not be able to talk to him.

N: It's hard to see him every day, and not be able to talk to him.

Passage 7 - #42

N: The man who marries her is going to have quite a life.

*M: The man who marries her is going to have one hell of a life.

Passage 8 - #60

N: What do you mean, Melissa knows all about it? What could you have been thinking to tell her about what happened that night?
*M: What do you mean, Melissa knows all about it? What the goddamn hell could you have been thinking to tell her about what happened that night?

Factor 7: Use of Hedges

Passage 1 - #22

*N: He looked serious.
F: He looked kind of serious.

Passage 2 - #83

*N: He wanted to know why I was looking for you, you know, when we were friends.
F: He wanted to know why I was looking for you, you know, when we were friends, stuff like that.

Passage 3 - #54

F: Then he sort of walks over to her and she kicks him in the leg.
*N: Then he walks over to her and she kicks him in the leg.

Passage 4 - #69

F: When he slapped her, she started crying and stuff.
*N: When he slapped her, she started crying.

Passage 5 - #43

*F: The scene takes place in just sort of one of the rooms in their apartment.
N: The scene takes place in one of the rooms in their apartment.

Passage 6 - #104

*F: He's giving her a backrub. He turns around to get some lotion or something and gives her a bit of a slap on the butt.
N: He's giving her a backrub. He turns around to get some lotion and gives her a slap on the butt.

Passage 7 - #3

N: Cecil had a security paranoia. At a demonstration, you'd see him giving instructions to his boys with his hand over his mouth. He'd always be talking with his hand over his mouth, mumbling into his fingers, and he'd tell his boys to talk that way too.

*F: Cecil had a kind of a security paranoia. At a demonstration or something, you'd see him giving instructions to his boys with his hand over his mouth. He'd always be talking with his hand over his mouth, mumbling into his fingers, and he'd tell his boys to talk that way too.

Passage 8 - #32

N: She's a masseuse, and she's giving him a rubdown.
*F: She's like a masseuse or something, and she's giving him a rubdown.

Factor 8: Use of Empty Adjectives

Passage 1 - #38

*N: We've found a great little hideaway where we spend most of our weekends, just the two of us.
F: We've found the most glorious little hideaway where we spend most of our weekends, just the two of us.

Passage 2 - #23

*N: In question is the final paragraph, with its cool guidebook voice uttering as inappropriate a fact as is imaginable, but what concerns us at the moment is the journalist's common practice of writing one-sentence paragraphs.
F: Most marvelously wrong is the final paragraph, with its cool guidebook voice uttering as inappropriate a fact as is imaginable, but what concerns us at the moment is the journalist's common practice of writing one-sentence paragraphs.

Passage 3 - #68

F: What an adorable looking puppy you've got there!
*N: What a fine looking puppy you've got there!

Passage 4 - #13

F: It's nice to get out of town for a few days.
*N: It's great to get out of town for a few days.

Passage 5 - #94

*F: It was very nice of Gene to help us out like that.
N: It was very good of Gene to help us out like that.

Passage 6 - #88

*F: You know, we've got a cute story in *Inside News* about this girl who's divorcing her husband.
N: You know, we've got a good story in *Inside News* about this girl who's divorcing her husband.

Passage 7 - #55

N: Helene, I hope you enjoy the dinner party tonight. We've put you next to our favorite young bachelor.
*F: Helene, I hope you enjoy the dinner party tonight. We've put you next to absolutely our favorite young bachelor.

Passage 8 - #45

N: I'm going to find a great little apartment, and if you're good, I'll let you spend the night once in a while.
*F: I'm going to find the most divine little apartment, and if you're good, I'll let you spend the night once in a while.

Factor 9: Use of Intensifiers

Passage 1 - #17

*N: Every morning at 5:45 sharp a steward comes to your stateroom to wake you up. It's very genteel - having a little servant in a white jacket come by and respectfully summon you into consciousness.
F: Every morning at 5:45 sharp a steward comes to your stateroom to wake you up. It's terribly genteel - having a little servant in a white jacket come by and respectfully summon you into consciousness.

Passage 2 - #75

*N: The chase scene in the movie was thrilling.
F: The chase scene in the movie was extremely thrilling.

Passage 3 - #58

F: You look so much happier the last few months. It's quite becoming - and astonishing, since you've been having such a terribly difficult time.
*N: You look so much happier the last few months. It's quite becoming - and astonishing, since you've been having such a difficult time.

Passage 4 - #47

F: The men who owned that factory were perfectly good men. They were a perfectly sound risk; the bank was perfectly justified in granting that loan.
*N: The men who owned that factory were good men. They were a sound risk; the bank was justified in granting that loan.

Passage 5 - #33

*F: How could you afford to stay at the Fantasyland Hotel? Isn't it frightfully expensive?
N: How could you afford to stay at the Fantasyland Hotel? Isn't it very expensive?

Passage 6 - #90

*F: Then he turns up the car radio very loud to WQXR, the classical musical station, apparently to impress me. The piece they're playing is something horribly morose by that old fraud Stravinsky.
N: Then he turns up the car radio very loud to WQXR, the classical musical station, apparently to impress me. The piece they're playing is something morose by that old fraud Stravinsky.

Passage 7 - #6

N: I'm not here to talk about any matter of great consequence. I just want to talk about unimportant things.
*F: I'm not here to talk about any matter of great consequence. I just want to talk about perfectly unimportant things.

Passage 8 - #97

N: When it comes to Marilla, I've learned not to disbelieve - she's too often right.
*F: When it comes to Marilla, I've learned not to disbelieve entirely - she's too often right.

Factor 10: Use of Hyperbole

Passage 1 - #51

*N: It was a wonderful day.
F: It was a day to end all days.

Passage 2 - #73

*N: I don't know why he doesn't come over any more. He hasn't been here for a long time.
F: I don't know why he doesn't come over any more. He hasn't been here for eons.

Passage 3 - #96

F: He's a great salesman. I'll bet he could persuade you to buy the moon in a paper bag if he set his mind to it.
*N: He's a great salesman. I'll bet there's nothing he couldn't persuade you to buy if he set his mind to it.

Passage 4 - #31

F: A woman is divorced in New York and for a certain period she is radioactive or something. No man wants to go near her.

*N: A woman is divorced in New York and for a certain period she is untouchable or something. No man wants to go near her.

Passage 5 - #53

*F: I waited an eternity for them, but they didn't show up.

N: I waited for them for a long time, but they didn't show up.

Passage 6 - #24

*F: Apologize? You can apologize till doomsday. I'll never forgive you for what you did.

N: Apologize? You can apologize as much as you like. I'll never forgive you for what you did.

Passage 7 - #4

N: No, I haven't heard anything yet. You know these government bureaucracies - it takes them a long time to get anything done.

*F: No, I haven't heard anything yet. You know these government bureaucracies - it takes them forever and a day to get anything done.

Passage 8 - #87

N: If you're worried about my going on this trip, don't be. I'll be back soon.

*F: If you're worried about my going on this trip, don't be. I'll be back in less than no time.

Factor 11: Use of Euphemism

Passage 1 - #59

*N: At that time they had considered it best to move their aging father to an old folks' home where he would be well taken care of.

F: At that time they had considered it best to move their aging father to a retirement home for senior citizens where he would be well taken care of.

Passage 2 - #72

*N: He couldn't believe it. His wife was pregnant for the second time in as many years.

F: He couldn't believe it. His wife was in the family way for the second time in as many years.

Passage 3 - #86

F: I was shocked to hear that you lost your husband in that plane crash last fall.
*N: I was shocked to hear that your husband died in that plane crash last fall.

Passage 4 - #19

F: Excuse me, I'm looking for a washroom. Is there one on this floor?
*N: Excuse me, I'm looking for a toilet. Is there one on this floor?

Passage 5 - #27

*F: The late president of the association, who passed away last Thursday, was laid to rest earlier today.
N: The late president of the association, who died last Thursday, was buried earlier today.

Passage 6 - #5

*F: We were asked by the police to go to the funeral home to identify the remains.
N: We were asked by the police to go to the morgue to identify the body.

Passage 7 - #92

N: The death of Barbara Frumm earlier this year was tragic. It was very unfortunate that she had to die so young.
*F: The death of Barbara Frumm earlier this year was tragic. It was very unfortunate that she had to leave so soon.

Passage 8 - #46

N: He had apparently been in the laundry room washing his underwear when I called.
*F: He had apparently been in the laundry room washing his unmentionables when I called.

Factor 12: Use of Slang

Passage 1 - #102

*N: Stalin did establish one useful precedent. He made it a practice to put to death whoever served as head of his secret police. He never let anybody stay in the job too long.
M: Stalin did establish one useful precedent. He made it a practice to bump off whoever served as head of his secret police. He never let anybody stay in the job too long.

Passage 2 - #41

*N: I don't know why people try so hard to control what will happen after they're dead. When you're dead and buried, you're in no position to control anything.
M: I don't know why people try so hard to control what will happen after they're dead. When you're six feet under, you're in no position to control anything.

Passage 3 - #7

M: And, in other news, thieves made off with an undisclosed amount of cash last night when they ripped off a convenience store in the west end.
*N: And, in other news, thieves made off with an undisclosed amount of cash last night when they robbed a convenience store in the west end.

Passage 4 - #70

M: I heard old Joe kicked the bucket last year. Did you happen to make it to his funeral?
*N: I heard old Joe died last year. Did you happen to make it to his funeral?

Passage 5 - #36

*M: Although the case against him was very weak, Nepoose took the rap for the murder of Rose Desjarlais.
N: Although the case against him was very weak, Nepoose was found guilty of the murder of Rose Desjarlais.

Passage 6 - #79

*M: His brother was serving a life sentence for wasting a member of a rival gang in a barroom brawl.
N: His brother was serving a life sentence for killing a member of a rival gang in a barroom brawl.

Passage 7 - #25

N: No, she isn't here right now. She went to the cemetery to put flowers on Aunt Harriet's grave.
*M: No, she isn't here right now. She went to the boneyard to put flowers on Aunt Harriet's grave.

Passage 8 - #61

N: We were out walking our dog. The dog was running around in the bushes alongside the path and, all of a sudden, she started howling. We ran to see what was going on, and there, lying quite close to the path, was this dead body - it looked like he hadn't been dead very long.
*M: We were out walking our dog. The dog was running around in the bushes beside the path and, all of a sudden, she started howling. We ran to see what was going on, and

there, lying quite close to the path, was this stiff - it looked like he hadn't been dead very long.

Factor 13: Neutral

Passage 1 - #48

*N: Some of them, when they get old, get real grumpy.
N: Some of them get real grumpy when they get old.

Passage 2 - #15

*N: The clamor of indignation that rose against the suggestion made by the newly appointed board member astonished everyone.
N: Everyone was astonished by the clamor of indignation that rose against the suggestion made by the newly appointed board member.

Passage 3 - #35

N: As far as customers go, there's not too many of them I like.
*N: As far as customers go, I don't like too many of them.

Passage 4 - #95

N: However violent he gets, King Kong remains a gentleman. His sense of chivalry is remarkable.
*N: However violent he gets, King Kong remains a gentleman. Remarkable is his sense of chivalry.

Passage 5 - #65

*N: The main point, however, is this.
N: This, however, is the main point.

Passage 6 - #82

*N: Human life deserves special protection, and one of the best ways to guarantee that protection is to assure that convicted murderers do not kill again. Only the death penalty can accomplish this end.
N: Human life deserves special protection, and one of the best ways to guarantee that protection is to assure that convicted murderers do not kill again. This end can be accomplished only by the death penalty.

Passage 7 - #8

N: Not all the skills that are necessary for learning mathematics are learned in school.
*N: Some of the skills that are necessary for learning mathematics are not learned in school.

Passage 8 - #67

N: The memory of our apprehension at the beginning is still strong.
*N: The memory of how apprehensive we were at the beginning is still strong.

Trial Run

Passage 1:

A: Obviously you have to think about your game plan, but you can think about something too much.
*B: Obviously you have to think about your game plan, but you can overthink something too much.

Passage 2:

*A: We have never ceased to talk about overpopulation, though true instances of it seem very rare.
B: We have always talked about overpopulation, though true instances of it seem very rare.

Passage 3:

*A: Well, we'll just see about that, pal. You haven't heard the last of it yet.
B: Well, we'll just see about that. You haven't heard the last of it yet.